THIRTEEN ARTICLES ON FREEMASONRY.

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PREFACE.

The first of these articles was published by itself in 1906 as a one-anna tract. Subsequent editions with fresh matter were made till the number of articles reached seven. Then it grew to thirteen, and assumed the size of a booklet. The new portions dealt specially with the anti-religious character of Continental Freemasonry; but the most important feature lay in an account of the various public exposures of Freemasonry which have occurred in recent years, resulting in its practical discredit not only among Catholics, but also in the eyes of the outside world. The Catholic Church no longer stands alone in its denunciations of the Masonic craft. Its condemnation is now confirmed by Governments and political leaders, who find in Masonry not only a danger to religion, but also a menace to the State, and an injury to the commonwealth. If there exist any Catholics hitherto unconvinced of the justice of the Church's verdict, they will now find their doubts removed by this impartial and independent witness from without.

The exposures referred to have most of them been published in The Examiner as they occurred, but in a scattered form : so it will be useful to enumerate them here.

(1) The recognition that Freemasonry in France, while professing to be a harmless philanthropic body, is really a pernicious meddler in political affairs, and has been convicted of systematic espionage, invidious patronage, domineering dictation to public officials, and interference with liberty and fair play in deparments of public service,

(2) The recognition in Belgium and Italy that Masonic membership is a menace to official integrity in the Army and Navy—and that the secret methods of the craft are detrimental to public life and unsuited to this modern age.

(3) An official refusal to recognise the Order in Argentina because its principles were found baneful to the well-being of the commonwealth.

(4) The recognition of the fact that Freemasonry has been at the back of the anti-religious and revolutionary mischief in most countries of Europe, e. g. in France, Portugal, Hungary and even Turkey.

(5) One further instance from Italy just emerges while this book is passing through the Press. *The Tablet*, (Feb. 24, 1923) writes :—

" The Grand Fascist Council has declared that you cannot be a Freemason and a Fascist. If you want to be a Fascist you must drop Freemasonry ; if you don't, Fascism will drop you. The main thing on which it prides itself is its work in the light of day ; Freemasonry is a secret society and double allegiance is impossible. Moreover, there is the complete divergence of policy regarding the Catholic religion. Both the rites here, Grand Orient and Ancient Scottish, are banned, though the latter are trying to excuse themselves and maintain the connection declared impossible. The determination is generally welcomed ; Freemasonry is not popular. The Grand Orient has taken it in silence, and is understood to be deliberating, having been disappointed in their attempt to nobble the movement, how to maintain influence in it in spite of the ban. And, indeed, history shows how difficult it is to keep the secretly infiltrating poison out. In any case let full credit be given to Signor Mussolini. The *Osservatore*

Romano gives this credit fully, while fearing that the craft will still manage to create difficulties. The *Corriere d'Italia* for the Popular Party is jubilant and takes credit to itself for its long campaign, but in the department of politicians and their newspapers the patient reader will give the palm of credit for sustained showing up of Freemasonry to the Nationalists and the *Idea Nazionale*; their attack on it being, of course, on the ground of its being a danger to the State as well as an enemy to religion, the two things indeed running very much--sometimes too much--together in their minds."

The evidence of these different statements, drawn from contemporary sources, is embodied in the enlarged reprint and forms, we consider, the most valuable part of its contents.

To this we have added several solutions of practical questions; as for example, the attendance of Catholics at Masonic concerts and balls, etc.

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I

WHAT ABOUT FREEMASONRY?

(EXAMINER, SEPT. 29TH, 1906.)

DURING the year 1906, a discussion regarding the Masonic laying of a foundation-stone in Bombay gave rise to no small amount of inquiry, both among outsiders and among ourselves, as to the precise reasons why Catholics take up the position they do with regard to the Freemasonic Order. Circumstances did not allow of anything like an elaborate treatment of what was really a large subject; but the following observations, published in THE EXAMINER at the time, were intended to put forward, as moderately and uncontroversially as possible, the Catholic view and the reasons which lie at the back of it:—

Our object is not to try and make out the worst possible case against Freemasonry, by raking up all those most extraordinary charges which, rightly or wrongly, have been raised against it. On the contrary we confine ourselves to essential and constitutional points about which, so far as we know, there can be no dispute.

We begin with a few facts about Freemasonry:—

(1) *Masonry is a religious Society;* that is, a Society holding a certain theological position. This is clearly seen by its principal tenet, viz., the official acknowledgment and worship of the Architect of the Universe. Mackey says:—"All the ceremonies of our Order are prefaced and terminate with prayer, because Masonry is a religious institution." (Lexicon of Freemasonry, Art. Prayer; p. 369). George Oliver speaks of Masonry as "a Society founded on the basis

of religion." (Antiq. Preface). "In 1878 the Grand Lodge refused to recognise the Grand Orient owing to its excluding belief in the Great Architect of the Universe, the most important land-mark of Freemasonry." (Cowen, p. 276).

(2) *The religion of Freemasonry is called pure Theism.*—Mackey writes :—"The religion of Masonry is pure Theism, on which its different members graft their own peculiar opinions, but they are not permitted to introduce them into the Lodge or to connect their truth or falsehood with the truth of Masonry." (Lexicon Art. Religion).

(3) *Freemasonry claims to be a universal religion.*—Mackey writes :—"Masonry is undoubtedly a religious institution—its religion being of that universal kind in which all men agree ; and which...embraces the existence of God, the immortality of the soul." (Masonic Jurisprudence, p. 95).

(4) *Freemasonry claims to be a perfect and all-sufficing religion.*—Sickels writes regarding the third degree :—"We now find a man complete in morality and intelligence, with a state of religion added to ensure him the protection of the deity and to guard him from going astray. These three degrees thus form a perfect and harmonious whole ; nor can we conceive that anything more can be suggested which the soul of man requires." (Freemason's Monitor, pp. 97-98).

(5) *Being a perfect and adequate religion, Freemasonry regards all other forms of religion as of no vital importance.*—Thus, the Charges of a Mason tell us that "Though in ancient times Masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was ; yet it is now thought more ex-

pedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves—that is, to be *good men and true*, or men of honour and honesty," etc. (Pocket Companion, Third edition. London, 1764). The modern Charge runs as follows :—"Let a man's religion or worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the Order, provided he believes in the great Architect of heaven and earth, and practices the sacred duties of morality. Masons unite with the virtuous of every persuasion in the firm and pleasing bond of fraternal love. They are taught to view the errors of mankind with compassion, and to strive by the purity of their own conduct to demonstrate the superiority of the faith they may possess." (Constitutions, Edition of 1867). "Masons say without hesitation that the man who lives up to his Masonic obligations is sure of heaven. Or as they more frequently put it: 'Masonry is good enough religion for me.'" (Blanchard).

FIRST OBJECTION : HETERODOXY.

These citations are sufficient to indicate that Masonry takes up a definite theological position, including only the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the laws of morality (Theism or Deism) and by implication excluding or disregarding all other tenets. Now Theism is all very well as far as it goes, in the absence of a fuller religion. But to set up Theism as a sufficient or adequate religion is tantamount to a rejection of Christianity. If Christianity is true, there can be no indifference regarding it. "He that is not for me is against me," said Christ our Lord ; and it cannot be held that Freemasonry is *for* Christ. By ignoring Christ it is against him at least negatively ; and by maintaining indifference as a principle it is positively against him.

If Freemasonry were a purely secular body--for instance a literary and social club, or a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or for the suppression of the slave trade—it would escape the objection now raised against it. But as soon as it enters into the field of religion, and takes up a theological position of its own—claiming certain theistic doctrines as religiously sufficient—it immediately becomes a rival and a substitute for other forms of religion, and therefore by implication hostile to them and incompatible with them.

All this involves the conclusion that Freemasonry is a "sect." A correspondent in the *Times of India* argued recently that "Freemasonry was unsectarian just because it was so comprehensive as to admit men of all sects and creeds." This writer overlooks the fact that comprehensiveness or unsectarianism, if elevated into a positive principle, becomes sectarian.* To regard as indifferent what other religious bodies regard as vital, becomes part of its theology—and therefore one of its tenets as a sect. In the mind of all Catholics this is clear enough. No Catholic could join a religious body which makes it a matter of indifference whether he is a Catholic or not. But with regard to Christians generally it ought to be equally clear. For no Christian ought, consistently with his own belief, to be able to join a religious body which professedly makes it a matter of religious indifference whether he believes in Christianity or not ; and which openly expresses this indifference, in its Indian Lodges, by appointing, side by side with the Great Bible Bearer, a Great Koran Bearer and Great Avesta Bearer.

* Thus it has been generally acknowledged, even among Protestants themselves, that "Birreligion," or the position of the Nonconformists in the Education question, is sectarian. A sect is formed not merely by what tenets it includes, but also by what tenets it excludes or implicitly rejects.

Now a corporate body which takes up a theological position such as neither Catholics nor Christians in general can consistently accept, certainly embodies all the essential characteristics of a sectarian society. Therefore, because of its maintenance of Theism as a *sufficient* religion, and its profession of indifference regarding more specific beliefs, Freemasonry fails entirely to repel the charge of being a sect.

SECOND OBJECTION : SECRECY.

The first thing one asks before deciding to join any corporate body is this :—What is the aim and object for which it exists ? No man can reasonably lend himself to the support of a Society unless he knows what he is promoting thereby. The first business of any Society is therefore to make its aims and methods known in such fulness as to secure the confidence of the public, and their intelligent co-operation. There are Societies devoted to certain secret aims which are known to its members alone. These are Secret Societies only in a wider sense, since they possess no secret as regards the members, but only as regards the outside public. An individual who is first let into the secret is able to judge whether its aims and objects are licit or not, and can join or not join accordingly. A Secret Society of this kind will always be regarded with suspicion by the uninitiated ; but still, if its aims are good, there seems to be, within certain limits, no objection to being a member of it—simply because each member knows the programme which lies before him. But there is another kind of Secret Society in which the aims and methods are reserved to the knowledge of a certain inner circle, outside which lie other circles of members, each initiated in some degree, the lowest being practically uninitiated altogether. Thus in varying de-

grees, each grade of members remains in the dark, and each becomes therefore the blind or half-blind tool of those who are in possession of the full secret. Now, even supposing the secret aims of such a Society are good or harmless in themselves; still the position of the lower and uninitiated members is an irrational one, such as any self-respecting man ought to decline.

But the existence of an inner secret is also open to objection on more serious grounds. From the nature of the case it is impossible to ascertain whether the secret aims of the Society are good or bad; and thus it remains always possible that the lower members are unknowingly giving themselves to the support of schemes which, if known, would cause them immediately to resign. It is true that the uninitiated or half-initiated members cannot be made to take a direct and active part in the wickedness of the secret clique, should their designs be evil. But by their subscriptions, by the weight of rank or numbers, they are nevertheless serving the hidden cause. Now it is not enough that these lower members fail to discover anything which makes their conscience revolt. Sound morality requires more; it demands that a man should not lend himself blindly to schemes, the nature of which is concealed from him—and which may, so far as he knows, be either good or bad.

No one, we think, will deny that Freemasonry is a Secret Society in the sense just described. The fact is written clearly on the face of the Order, in the hierarchies of grades and initiations which it comprises. Even of we had no means of proving that the aims of the inner Masonic circle are evil, the possibility of their being evil would be sufficient to constitute a grave objection to Freemasonry, in consequence of

which no man of sound principles should allow himself to be enlisted in its ranks.

THIRD OBJECTION : THE OATH.

The secrecy of the Order prevents us from possessing anything like a complete knowledge on this subject. From the forms given in such hand-books as the *Complete Workings of Craft Freemasonry* (1883) we can only weave together the salient elements of the obligation as imposed on the lower grades. We there learn that the candidate swears "to conceal and never to reveal" any of the secrets of Freemasonry, "unless to a true and lawful brother, or in a regular Lodge"—"under no less penalty than that of having y...t...c...a..." (some darkly hinted physical mutilation (p. 42,258) ; or even death (p. 105) ; and of "being branded as a wilfully perjured individual void of all moral worth" (p. 39,42). The obligation also includes "never trying to obtain the secrets of a superior degree" (p. 57) ; also obedience to the rules, and to resolutions passed by the majority, and perfect submission to the Master and Wardens, acting "in their official capacity" (*ib*). Except for the physical penalties thus accepted, there would be nothing inherently objectionable in such a form of oath, provided its full scope and bearing, and the aims and ends to which it must be subordinated, were clearly known to all ; but the want of this is precisely what constitutes the Catholic objection against it.

It is popularly supposed that the initiated member swears absolute obedience to all orders, no matter if they involve the commission of a crime. We do not venture to make this assertion our own. The *form* may be absolute ; but it must be subject to the restrictions of the Constitutions, whatever they may be—and in the Constitutions of the Order we find it stated that "A

Mason is particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience." According to this clause a Mason, if ordered to commit what he knew to be a crime, would be bound by the rules of his Order to refuse obedience—just as in the Jesuit Order the vow of obedience is limited by the clause in the Constitutions which says that he is bound to obey only where no sin is involved—*Ubi peccatum non cerneretur.* Moreover, in the ceremony itself it is officially declared that "in these vows there is nothing incompatible with your civil, moral or religious duties" (p. 437); and although the personally confided secrets of a brother are to be kept inviolable, express exception is made to "murder, felony and all other offences contrary to the law of God and the ordinances of the realm" (p. 104). Hence, supposing that no Mason binds himself by oath to obey orders to commit a crime, the objection to the oath must be placed on other grounds, viz., those already given under the heading of secrecy. No man has a right to bind himself to obey orders conveyed to him from unknown superiors, or for the promotion of aims the nature of which is concealed from him. In short he is bound to see and know the bearings of his action, and the purposes it is designed to serve. But this is exactly what a Mason of the lower grades does *not* know—the secret being reserved to the initiated few of the innermost circle.

We have been told that upright Freemasons, when asked how they can submit to an oath of this description, have sometimes answered that they "regard it merely as a form, not believing that the Order has secret ends beyond those which it ostensibly puts forward before the world." They seem in fact to think that the whole business of the secret is so much "mystifying mummery."

This we learnt from a Freemason not long ago. If this be the view taken, it seems to us a preposterous one. To swear an oath as a mere form is, to say the least, a lamentable trifling with sacred things; while to take it on the presumption that it will never be made subservient to objectionable ends, cannot be cleared from the charge of recklessness in serious matters. Catholics at any rate cannot, consistently with their principles of moral theology, take such an oath, whether seriously or as a mere form; and this constitutes the third objection to Freemasonry.

FOURTH OBJECTION: ANTI-CHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY.

We have already condemned the secrecy of the Freemasonic Order, even supposing as a matter of fact that the secret aims and methods of the Order are innocent in themselves. But we now come to the question whether, in spite of this secrecy, the aims and workings of the Order do not betray themselves. In certain cases they seem to have done so to a considerable extent. Whatever may be the condition of English Freemasonry, it seems an undeniable fact that continental Freemasonry is nothing short of an active conspiracy against Christianity in general, and against the Catholic Church in particular. From the amount of Masonic literature which has been collected together by many recent authors, we should surmise that continental Freemasons have thrown their mask aside, and have paraded their secret ostentatiously to the world. We cannot in the compass of this occasional article go into details, but it will be enough to refer to Cowen, *X Rays in Freemasonry*, or Preuss, *American Freemasonry*, as well as several C. T. S. tracts. Assuming the facts to be as stated, we ask what explanation can be offered by the Freemasons. We can

imagine their saying that "this anti-Christian policy is directly counter to the spirit of Freemasonry, which professes complete toleration of all religions"—adding that "in England, Freemasonry has preserved the true spirit of the Order, while the other Lodges have departed from it." To this we should reply:—If this be the case, the Freemasons of England, instead of preserving fellowship with continental Freemasons, are in duty bound to regard them as so many apostates, and should cut them off from communion as such. And yet, nothing of this sort has, at least effectively, been done. An English Mason still enjoys the rights of brotherhood in the Italian and French Lodges, and an Italian or French Mason enjoys the same fellowship among his English brethren—while all are unanimous in declaring the solidarity of Freemasonry all over the world. [On this point, see later, page 29].

If this statement of the case is correct, the presumption seems to be, *not* that the inner policy of Freemasonry is *necessarily* to labour for the destruction of Christianity, but that it lies at least within the scope and competency of the inner circle to take up such a policy if they like, without let or hindrance from the secret Constitutions of the Order. The mere *possibility* of this being the case constitutes our fourth objection to Freemasonry.

But at least it might be and is argued that "the English branch of the Order is not guilty of this policy or implicated in it. Hence whatever objection there might be to joining continental Lodges, the same objection does not apply to the English." To this we answer:—Suppose the case to be so; suppose that this fourth objection is not applicable to the English section as such, there still remains the other three

objections already enumerated—each one of which taken singly is enough to settle the question, for Catholics at least; and we think, enough to settle it for Christians in general. However there is one further point to be noticed. Even if English Masonry is not of itself directly guilty; still the solidarity of the whole Order cannot be denied. Hence, no matter how much English Freemasons may deprecate the conduct of their brethren abroad, they are still in some indirect way implicated. English Masonry by its respectable character is extremely useful as a set-off against continental rascality, giving it the moral support of numbers and rank. Besides, it is even said that anti-Catholic schemes, in Italy especially, have been greatly furthered by English money and English influence; and who knows whether the inner clique in England is not leagued hand-and-glove with their foreign brethren in their worst enterprises—the respectable figure-heads and lower grades being in fact nothing but the unconscious dupes and tools of continental conspirators?

Such is the charge which is often expressed. And while the accusation is incapable of proof, it is also incapable of disproof. Nor can the Order justly complain of calumny or misrepresentation. It is the penalty of secrecy to be suspected of the worst that can be imagined; and moreover it furnishes the awful possibility of it all being true. So long as that possibility continues wrapped up in the veils of secrecy, so long does our objection, even against English Masonry, remain.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

Our objections to the Masonic Order can therefore be summed up as follows:—

(1) The theological position of Freemasonry, which makes it a religious sect, embodying the sufficiency of

theism, indifferentism regarding more specific creeds, and (by implication) a rejection of the divine claims of Christianity.

(2) The secrecy of the aims and methods of Freemasonry, which puts its lower members in the unjustifiable position of supporting a cause which is concealed from their knowledge, and which *possibly* may be evil.

(3) The confirmation of this unjustifiable position by an oath, which in itself is wrong for the same reasons.

(4) The open and declared anti-Christian policy of continental Freemasonry, which reflects on English Masonry, at least through the solidarity of the Order throughout the world.

It is on the strength of these reasons that the Church, from the first manifestations of Freemasonic existence in the year 1717, has firmly and explicitly condemned the Freemasonic Order, and forbidden Catholics to join it under pain of forfeiting Catholic church-membership. Anyone of these four reasons would suffice to justify the Church's prohibition; while the four together constitute an unimpeachable case. It is for the same reasons that Catholics are bound to avoid countenancing the Order indirectly, even where this would not incur the penalties attached to actual membership. Whatever outsiders may think of the matter, at least they will see from the foregoing pages that our position does not arise from blind fanaticism, but rests on intelligible grounds of principle; and Catholics themselves will be all the better for understanding what that groundwork of principle is.

NON-CATHOLICS AND FREEMASONRY.

With non-Catholics the case is in many respects different, since they are actuated by a different set of religious principles. They do not, like us, hold that

the Catholic Church is the one sole divinely instituted religion, while all others are human variations, either by way of mutilation or of doctrinal corruption. They have no difficulty in extending their patronage to various sects on the ground of "fundamental agreement," slurring over points of disagreement. They can pass from one to another indifferently, and take part in the services of each in turn. They are not furnished, as we are, with a code of definite and clean-cut principles; they dislike "theories," and take a rough practical view of things. Hence they feel no difficulty in attaching themselves to a Society professing a religious belief much more limited than their own, or one which regards varieties of creed as a matter of personal opinion or taste; no difficulty in lending themselves to a Society which presents a harmless front, no matter what its secret capabilities may be. They apparently see no difficulty in regarding a solemn oath in the light of a mere form, or of taking it with an assurance which it does not of itself provide. They have no difficulty in confining their attention to their own branch, without caring about the conduct of other branches, etc., etc.

All this we consider to be quite wrong. Nevertheless, granting that such views exist, it is only natural that outsiders should act in good conscience according to them. Hence, in the eyes of a Catholic there is no discredit or breath of infamy attached to membership on the part of the many noble and honourable Englishmen who are proud of their Masonic rank. But with Catholics themselves the case is different; and outsiders must be got to recognise the difference, whether they sympathise or not. Those who cannot agree with us, or see the matter as we see it, will—if they are judicious and honourably-minded men—at least feel respect for

us, who are ready to sacrifice the social or material advantages which are supposed to accrue from Masonic membership, simply on the ground of what we deem to be the sound principles of ethical conduct. Hence much is to be gained by Catholics courteously yet firmly adhering to their own principles, and openly acting upon them wherever the opportunity occurs.

Note.—The reasons which are said to attract outsiders to become Freemasons are these :—(1) The *fascination of mystery and ceremonial*, which appeals to certain temperaments. We have been told however that many Masons do not believe in the mystery, and think the ceremony childish. Eye-witnesses at the recent function described it as "extremely stupid—like children pretending to be so and so in the nursery;" (2) *Comprehensiveness and absence of sectarian strife.* The absence of strife is good. The comprehensiveness would be good in a purely secular society, but cannot be approved when held as a theological principle; (3) *Benevolence and charity.* Yet as far as we know, Masonry normally exercises "charity" only to its own members, their widows, etc., and is therefore more of a Mutual Aid Society than a Benevolent Society. There need be no more charity in it than there is in a Burial or Provident Fund, where in return for a fixed subscription you receive support during sickness for self and family, etc. (4) *Good fellowship and mutual support in business*, etc.—one Mason helping another to promotions, etc. This is however a system which is capable of much abuse and much injustice to others who are not of the Order. On the whole we do not see much in all this to recommend Freemasonry to upright and honourable men.

The points briefly sketched out in the foregoing article will receive fuller elucidation from those which follow.

II

A SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION.

(Examiner, Jan. 5th and 12th, 1907.)

The discussion on Freemasonry in Bombay, alluded to in the previous article, was not without its response in other quarters. On reaching Calcutta some time later, we found *The Englishman* engaged in a controversy on the same subject, which grew fast and furious day by day, often to the extent of several columns—the interest of which was kept up for a space of three weeks, only then to die out from sheer lack of anything fresh to be said on the subject. Having made a complete collection of the correspondence from beginning to end, we came to the conclusion that, since the arguments were fairly representative and almost exhaustive, we could not do better than summarise the whole discussion with comments. All the objections and difficulties therein raised are sure to recur again and again, and a clear answer to them will likely enough prove useful in future times.

The ball was started by the *Catholic Herald,* which on September 26th called attention to the case in Bombay, and raised a similar protest against the use of Masonic rites in a function which was about to take place in Calcutta. This protest was reproduced by *The Englishman* on October 4th. This on the following day drew from an "English Freemason" a moderately worded letter of inquiry as to the reasons why Catholics objected to Freemasonry. In answer to this question, a correspondent next day sent in a copy of our article "What about Freemasonry," as calculated to furnish a complete answer. Out of this article *The Englishman* published the last few paragraphs, in which the Catholic

position is briefly summed up. Then the discussion began. First came a letter signed "Catholic Freemason," in which the writer declared that, though a Catholic, he "could not see an atom of reason in the rabid denouncement of the craft by the Catholic Church." Next came a letter from a Catholic explaining that Freemasonry was condemned because of its mischievous character on the continent. Thirdly came an epistle signed "Sensible Catholic," who has the ill manners to taunt the Editor of the *Catholic Herald* (and the Jesuit Fathers generally) with being "foreigners." Next there appeared a letter from a Jesuit Father championing the arguments contained in our article and further explaining them. And so the fight went on day by day for three weeks—letters from Catholics, loyal or disloyal to the Church; and letters from outsiders, furious or sober, offensive or courteous, inquisitive or assertive, with an occasional display of wit and humour. The result was a large *olla podrida* of views, opinions, difficulties, and solutions either right or wrong, with a gradual clearing up of the bearings of the case—so that on the whole it may be said that Catholic principles obtained a wide hearing; and to this extent at least the discussion did good. On the other hand, some thought that the signs of a split among Catholics themselves was damaging to our cause; while others considered that the airing of the Catholic position would rouse bad feeling outside the Church, etc. The split among Catholics was certainly disedifying. Still the disloyalty of some only served to bring out the loyalty of others. As for outsiders, if the publication of our principles breeds bad feeling, that is merely the penalty which accompanies devotion to principles in any case; and we cannot help that.

Picking out the different points of the discussion, we shall now append a short comment to each :—

(1) *The ceremony of laying a foundation-stone has no religious significance.*

Answer.—Anyone who has read the text of the ritual, as published in the Bombay papers, will see that it contains several prayers addressed to the great Architect of the Universe. Can these prayers be without religious significance ? Surely not ; and this being the case, the only question is, *what significance ?* Taking the prayers as they stand. there seems to be nothing objectionable in them. The Catholic Church could quite easily embody them in her own ritual; and if they were so embodied, no one we think would find any fault with them. The objection is therefore not in the prayers themselves, but in the associations attached to them. They are the official prayers of the Masonic Order, to be recited by Masonic officials ; and our objection lies precisely in that. To take an illustration. The Lord's Prayer is of course entirely unobjectionable. But suppose the Masonic ritual consisted in reciting the Lord's Prayer, we should object to it all the same—not because of the Lord's Prayer in itself, but because it was a Masonic religious service. Or let us take another example. The services of the Anglican Prayer-book are so unobjectionable in themselves, that it would be possible for the Catholic Church to use them just as they stand ; and if performed in a Catholic Church by Catholic priests under the Church's approbation, Catholics could attend them and derive great devotional profit from them. But when performed in an Anglican church by Anglican ministers they become something far different from the mere words. They embody the official life, and connotate the official doctrine and authority of the

Anglican church; and as such, Catholics can have nothing to do with them. That is our case in a nutshell. We object to Catholics participating in other religious services except Catholic ones, on the principle that such services represent a religious institution or embody a religious position which Catholics cannot accept.

(2) *Masonic rites merely add splendour to the foundation-laying, just as the purple cassock adds splendour to Catholic functions.*

Answer.—Masonic rites and purple cassocks do more than this. They imply and express respectively the Masonic craft and the Catholic religion lying at the back of them; and it is on this account that we object to Masonic rites in a public function.

(3) *Catholic rites would be used in opening a hospital in any Catholic country; and no Englishman residing there ought to object to them. Why then object to Masonic rites in India?*

Answer.—Simply because the case is totally different. In a Catholic country the Catholic religion is the established religion of the State; and public functions are done according to the Catholic rite as part of the law of the land. In India, on the contrary, there is no established religion. All are equally unofficial, and all equally regarded by the State with strict neutrality. Hence every religious community in India has a right to object to religious or sectarian features being introduced into functions of a public nature—anything in which the public in general are equally concerned. Catholic establishments may be opened with Catholic rites; Parsi establishments with Parsi rites; Protestant establishments with Protestant rites; Hindu establishments with Hindu rites; and finally, Masonic establishments with Masonic rites. But general establishments,

public establishments, or Government establishments must not be opened by any but purely civil rites. Neither Hinduism nor Zoroastrianism nor Catholicism nor Protestantism can be introduced into them, without the express consent of the commonwealth—else it is an unconstitutional act, sure to be offensive at least to some. Whatever other communities may think of Masonic ceremonies, Catholics at least object to them as much as they object to other kinds of non-Catholic religious ceremonies; and the professed neutrality of the State gives their objection a constitutional basis. If an Englishman in Spain objected to Catholic rites in a public affair, he would simply be told that the rites were according to the law of the country, and that his objection was therefore unconstitutional; whereas in India the contrary is the case.

(4) *But Freemasons do not object to Catholic ceremonies in Catholic countries. Why therefore do Catholics object to Masonic ceremonies in Masonic countries?*

Answer.—We deny that India is a Masonic country. But as for the rest, Freemasons in Catholic countries *do* object to Catholic ceremonies, and that in a very effectual manner. There is hardly a Catholic country in which the Freemasonic party is not identical with the anti-clerical party; and it has done and is still doing its best to root Catholicism out of the land.

(5) *Catholics are not obliged to be present at the function. Why then should they object against it?*

Answer.—*Retorquetur argumentum.* Supposing instead of Masonic rites, a public hospital in Calcutta or Bombay were opened by Catholic rites. What roars of indignation would arise from Protestants and Parsis and Hindus and the rest. Do you think any of them would be satisfied by the answer "No one is compelled to be

present at the ceremony ?" Their retort would be :—"It is not a question of attendance, but of the thing in itself. Why should a professedly neutral government allow Catholic ceremonies to be foisted on the country in such public affairs ?" That is the question at issue.

(6) *I sign myself a Catholic Freemason.*

Answer.—You might as well sign yourself a "Catholic Swedenborgian" or a "Catholic Christian Scientist." You may have been born and baptised a Catholic, and may still believe in the Catholic Church and its doctrines. But so long as you are a Freemason you are cut off and disowned by your own Church. No bishop, priest or deacon all the world over, from the Pope downwards, will acknowledge you as a member of the Church. You may attend Mass and Benediction still, and no one will turn you out. But if you go to confession, no priest will or can give you absolution ; and if you approach the altar no priest can or will (knowingly) give you the Holy Sacrament. Nor will any priest celebrate your marriage for you, or give you extreme unction, until you have resigned your membership of the craft, and confessed your sin of disobedience, and made yourself over repentant for reconciliation with Mother Church. You may resent this ; you may not understand this ; you may think it all wrong. But you cannot alter the fact that you are no longer a Catholic in the eyes of the Church to whom you profess allegiance—nor will be, so long as you append "Freemason" to your name.

(7) *But there is not one atom of reason in the rabid denouncement of the craft by the Catholic Church.*

Answer.—You may fail to see an atom of reason ; but the Church's law stands just as firmly as before. The Church not merely denounces the craft, but abso-

lutely forbids any Catholic to join it under forfeiture of membership. The incestuous Corinthian might not have seen a single atom of reason in St. Paul's denunciation of incest—especially as it was so common in those days. But that did not stop St. Paul from "handing him over to Satan for the punishment of the flesh, that his soul might be saved in the day of the Lord." And there he remained handed over till St. Paul received him back again, repentant, and the better for his penance. The reason may not be at all clear, but the prohibition is as plain as a pikestaff. Moreover, it is equally plain on Catholic principles that the Church has the right and power to make such a prohibition, and to impose such a penalty upon those who disregard it. As a man you may not understand why Freemasonry is condemned ; but as a Catholic you ought to understand the power and authority of the Church ; and you ought to know that joining the Freemasons is an act of disobedience.

Secondly, the denunciations of the Church would be "rabid" if pronounced out of blind and ignorant fanaticism. But look at a list of the popes who have uttered them :—Clement XII, Benedict XIV, Pius VII, Leo, XII, Pius VIII, Gregory XVI, Pius, IX, and Leo XIII, —the first dated 1738, the last 1884 ; a period of 146 years in all. Some of them were eminent scholars ; some of them meek and gentle saints ; all of them (one would think) free from the suspicion of "rabidity" in the mind of any well-read Catholic. Why should the popes have gone out of their way time after time to pounce down on a body of outsiders, working for the most part in countries far away, and undistinguishable from hundreds of other organised bodies outside the Church—unless a knowledge of Masonic enterprise had

forced upon their minds the conviction that the Order was of a nature incompatible with Catholic aims and principles? And when we consider that according to Catholic theology, no one is allowed to defame another, even a corporate body, except on clearly ascertained grounds and in defence of truth and right—surely we have before us in these papal condemnations a most cogent presumption that the popes must have known well what they were doing—even if unable of our own knowledge to find out the precise reasons which led them to act as they did.

(8) *But what are the real Catholic reasons against Freemasonry? The only reason I ever got from the clergy was that that Masonry was a secret society, and that nothing secret could be good.*

Answer.—If this was the answer you received, we can divide it into two parts. As to the first, I think it is well recognised that Freemasonry *is* a secret society. As to the second, the statement is too broad. Secrecy to conceal what ought to be concealed is good; while secrecy which keeps us in the dark where we ought to be in the light is bad. Freemasonry, by keeping us in the dark as to its aims and objects, is a secret society in the objectionable sense.

(9) *Masonry professes to have no aims except good ones; and this being the case, why should not her tactics for promoting good aims be kept secret from the enemy?*

Answer.—The secret is kept not merely from enemies but from friends; nay, even from all the members of the lower grades. Besides, even if in fact the aims of Masonry were good, the veils of secrecy naturally and properly create a suspicion which is enough to deter all prudent men. If the secret is a good and beneficial one, why keep it from the public? The fact that it is

kept from the public opens up at least vast possibilities of its being something bad.

(10) *If secrecy among Freemasons is objected to, what about the secrecy of the Catholic confessional?*

Answer.—The secrecy of the confessional is merely to preserve confidential communications intact. A lawyer is obliged to keep private the disclosures made by his client, because they are given in confidence, and because the client would not make them unless they were safe. Similarly with a Catholic priest, who receives confidential communications in order to give advice and absolution, according to the rules of the Catholic religion—rules which are not secret, but openly known to anyone who likes to know them. Moreover, a lawyer merely keeps the secret for sake of his client, not for any private ends of his own. Similarly with the Catholic priest, who keeps the confidences of the penitent intact for the sake of the penitent, and not to make any use of them for himself. Thirdly if a client wishes the lawyer to make use of his confidential communications, the lawyer can do so. Equally so, if a penitent wishes his communications to be made any use of, the priest can act accordingly. Finally the secrecy of the confessional is binding only on the priest and not on the penitent, who is under no obligations of secrecy at all. The secrecy of the confessional is therefore simply the protection of private confidences given for a good purpose. It is not for the concealment of private schemes and designs, nor is it in order to blind or hoodwink anybody whatsoever. Hence the case of the confessional and of Freemasonry are totally different.

(11) *The Catholic objection against taking an oath, the scope of which is not known, holds good against Catholicism also; for do not religious take vows the scope*

of which is unknown to them, and this at an immature age; and are not children in baptism committed to a sort of oath before they understand what it means?

Answer.—Here are two cases. First, as regards vows taken by young religious, Catholic theology teaches that no young religious ought to be admitted to the vows until their full nature and scope has been explained and substantially understood. Consequently, any young religious who took the vows without sufficiently understanding their scope would not be bound by them; and the vows themselves would be reckoned as null and void. Secondly, as regards baptism, the god-parents do by deputy promise on behalf of the child that it will renounce the world, the flesh and the devil—in other words, sin in its various forms. This promise is so manifestly good that no one can object to it; or if he did, he would be objecting against the teaching and practice of the Apostles and of the Christian Church.

(12) *The Church objects to Freemasonic secrecy because it prevents a man from making a complete confession.*

Answer.—If Freemasonry *does* prevent a Catholic from making a complete confession, that is a capital reason for objecting to it. But the Catholic Church objects to Freemasonry on quite other grounds as well, *e. g.*; because Freemasonry is a religious and therefore a sectarian institution.

(13) *But this objection is false. Freemasonry is not a religious institution; and if Mackey says so, this is only his own individual opinion, and proves nothing.*

Answer.—Mackey's book is nevertheless a standard hand-book recognised by the Masonic order. Moreover, he proves his point by showing that Masonry officially holds a belief in the Architect of the Universe and other

religious doctrines, beside opening and closing its meetings, and carrying on its ceremonies with theological professions and prayers. Freemasonry, in short, officially professes a religious creed and a code of religious worship. Besides, it requires its members to accept that creed and to attend those services ; and what more, pray, is wanted to make it a religious institution ?

(14) *Catholics seem to be under the delusion that Mosonry is a religious order.*

Answer.—We should not quite call it a "religious order ;" but, considering that it is a religious institution embodying a creed of belief and a code of worship, we should rather call it a "religious sect."

(15) *But Freemasonry is not a sect. It is on the contrary professedly unsectarian, ready to accept as members those who belong to any sect or creed.*

Answer.—Freemasonry, we insist, is a sect in spite of what you call its professed unsectarianism. The attitude of positive indifference regarding various sects is in itself a sectarian position ; for it maintains a theological principle of indifferentism which cannot be consistently accepted by other religious bodies. Masonry professes that it is a matter of indifference whether a man is a Christian, or a Mahomedan, or a Zoroastrian, or a Hindu. No Christian sect can subscribe to that principle—seeing that all Christian sects hold the vital importance of Christianity as the one true and divinely revealed religion.

(16) *But Anglican ministers and even bishops are Freemasons, and do not see in it anything inconsistent with their Christian profession. Why not the same with Catholics ?*

Answer.—Unfortunately Anglican bishops can be inconsistent. They lend themselves to a theistical

society which ignores Christ, and professedly regards Christian teaching as a matter of indifference. If they remembered that Christianity is of vital importance they could not consistently do so. Catholics do not lose sight of this principle as Protestants sometimes do; and therefore they at least cannot embrace Freemasonry.

(17) *But Freemasonry ignores Christ simply because, being older than Christ, it could not include his teaching.*

Answer.—We deny absolutely that Freemasonry is older than Christ. Freemasonry came into existence for the first time among the Deists in England about the year 1717; and all its boasted history before this date is so much fiction, which no critical historian will accept for a moment. But even supposing that Freemasonry had existed before Christ, it ought to have accepted Christ when he came. Not having done so, it becomes an out-of-date affair, just like Judaism. Until Freemasonry professes its allegiance to Christ, no Christian can consistently have anything to do with it.

(18) *But Freemasonry, though it ignores Christ in name, upholds Christ's teaching by proclaiming the universal brotherhood of man, and by doing good as Christ did.*

Answer.—So far as it takes up part of Christ's moral teaching, it does well. But Christ taught a great deal more than this. For instance, he taught that he was the Saviour of the world; that he was the Son of God; that all men were bound to become his disciples; that all must believe in his apostles' teaching and that they must be baptised, and must receive the Holy Eucharist, etc. Freemasonry, on the contrary, teaches that all these are matters of indifference. Therefore Freemasonry is an effect diametrically opposed to several of the essentials of Christ's religious teaching.

(19) *But Freemasonry helps men to be better disciples of Christ.*

Answer.—So far as it does this, it helps in a good work. We do not quarrel with Masonry for the truth which it maintains, but for the truth which it ignores and denies. So far as it supports morality, it is good; but so far as it ignores the rest of Christ's teaching, and regards it as a mere matter of indifference, so far it is bad.

(20) *But why object to Freemasonry, since it upholds as fundamental a belief in and reverence for the Supreme Creator and Father of all; since it maintains the fundamentals of Christian morality; since it outrages no one's religious tenets—in short, since it asserts nothing in which all religions do not agree?*

Answer.—We repeat: Freemasonry is not objectionable for these points which it maintains, but for other points which it denies. It denies the vital importance of a man being a Christian and a member of the Christian Church; and therefore it denies what is a fundamental principle among all Christians. We cannot admit that Christian belief and membership is a matter of indifference; and therefore we cannot countenance or support a body which maintains such an error.

(21) *But the English national motto, "Dieu et mon droit," and even the Lord's prayer, contain no mention of Christ. Do you argue from this that the English nation and the users of the Lord's prayer are merely theists and opposed to Christianity?*

Answer.—We do not argue anything so absurd. There is no need to mention Christ in everything; but at least we must not profess that Christianity is a matter of indifference or of individual taste; and this is what Freemasonry openly does.

(22) *But if Freemasonry is sectarian, Jesuitry is also sectarian.*

Answer.—Not at all. Jesuitry upholds the full and entire teaching and practice of the Church just as the rest of Catholics do. It differs only in practical organisation. The Jesuits are in fact nothing but a number of Catholics grouped together into one corporate body, living under a certain rule of life, and devoted in certain specific ways to promoting the cause of the Catholic Church. As for the meaning of a sect, we define it as "an organised body of men officially maintaining a theological creed and code of worship, which other Christian bodies cannot accept." Freemasonry certainly does this, and is therefore a "sect" in the strict sense of the word.

(23) *But its profession of belief in the great Architect merely indicates that it is not atheistic.*

Answer.—At the same time its profession that other dogmas are a matter of indifference, involves a denial of the vital importance of Christianity, and especially of Catholicism; and that is enough for its condemnation.

(24) *But the Catholic objection to Freemasonry rests on an imperfect understanding of the difference between English and continental Freemasonry.*

Answer.—It rests on nothing of the kind. Three of the four objections which the Church puts forward, hold good against English Freemasonry taken by itself. English Freemasonry is, we maintain, a religious institution embodying theological principles which are opposed to Catholic principles; and for that reason taken alone, Catholics can have no more to do with English Freemasonry than they can have to do with English Unitarianism. Secondly, English Freemasonry is a secret society, and exacts a secret oath; and these are two more reasons why we cannot have any connec-

tion even with English Freemasonry. Only one more reason remains; viz., that Freemasonry is actively anti-Catholic. This objection applies firstly and directly to continental Freemasonry; and it applies to English Masonry only so far as it is implicated with continental Freemasonry by the solidarity of the Order. Even if we should pass over this objection when dealing with English Masonry, the other three reasons remain applicable to English Freemasonry in their full force.

(25) *But you won't get us non-Catholics to see all that. We hold that various religious creeds are a matter of indifference so long as a man leads a good life; and we have no objection to joining a body which upholds a belief in God and the practice of morality.*

Answer.—We do not altogether expect to convince you, so long as you hold such principles; but we do at least wish to proclaim our disagreement with you on these very principles which you have just enunciated. And this for three reasons:—First, to uphold what we regard as a true principle—viz., the vital importance of the Christian religion—as opposed to your false principle of indifferentism; secondly, to get you to see that our objections to Masonry, even though you do not agree with them, rest not on unreasoned prejudice but on an intelligible foundation; thirdly, to show Catholics themselves what their own principles really are—thus to prevent them from falling into the mistake of becoming Freemasons; or what is almost as bad, from maintaining in public that their own Church is wrong.

(26) *But the Grand Orient in France is not Freemasonic.*

Answer.—The Grand Orient is one of the greatest of the Masonic Lodges, which not only professes to be

Freemasonic, but also claims to be acting in accordance with Masonic principles in trying to uproot the Catholic faith in France. It is true that English Masons some years ago repudiated the Grand Orient for professing atheism, and also for taking part in politics. But this repudiation does not seem to have had much effect; and we believe that Freemasons of the Grand Orient would be accepted into the English Lodges if they came over for that purpose, in spite of the repudiation.

At the very time we are writing these lines, an instructive side-light on this subject comes to us from France. At the moment when the French Government is in the act of putting the Separation law into effect, expelling bishops and priests from their homes, closing schools and seminaries, and taking proceedings against churches, the *Times'* correspondent (Jan. 1st) tells us that:—

"The Grand Orient of Italy has sent the following telegram to the Grand Orient of France:—'France is to-day taking a fresh and glorious step in the direction of the emancipation of mankind by inscribing a memorable date in the Golden Book of civil conquests. We send a fraternal greeting to you who have fought and conquered in the cause of our common ideal.'"

Whatever may be said about the English repudiation of the Grand Orient of France, no such repudiation has, to our knowledge, ever been made of the Grand Orient of Italy, which is still in full brotherly relations with the English Lodges. The about fact seems to speak eloquently for itself.

(27) *But our King and Emperor is the head and protector of the Freemasons in England.*

Answer.—When Edward VII. ascended the throne he resigned his post as Grand Master, which was then

taken up by the Duke of Connaught. In any case his headship would merely show that on his own principles he saw no objection to being a Freemason. It would no more recommend Masonry to Catholics than his headship of the Church of England recommends the Anglican Church to Catholics.

[King George V. is not, and never was, a Freemason].

(28) *Foreign Jesuits in India—many of them exiled from other lands—ought to be grateful to Great Britain for the liberties they enjoy under the British flag. Hence they at least ought not to raise any objection to Masonic rites in the opening of a British institution.*

Answer.—A more irrelevant remark could hardly have been put forward. It does not matter a jot who voices the objection so long as it is a good one. There is no doubt that if Mahomedans or Zoroastrians or Hindus had raised their protest instead of Catholics, everyone would have considered it an important question of religious feeling, and the Government would have been timorously careful to remove the cause of offence. Why not equally so with Catholics, who possess the same rights as others under the professedly neutral rule of India? It does not matter whether you outsiders understand the objection, or whether you agree with or sympathise with it. There the objection stands. It is a genuine one on our part; and the only question is whether it is in accordance with our constitutional rights under Indian rule. If it is, then all discussion is at an end.

(29) *But all this disturbance in the papers is calculated to do harm by rousing ill-feeling and religious rancour.*

Answer.—Possibly so; but we cannot abstain from publicly stating our principles on that account. We have a message to declare to the world; and the fact

that the message is unpopular among those who do not believe in it is no reason why we should suppress it and let matters slide. No, the only real harm was that done by writers like "Catholic Freemason," who made an open profession of disagreement with their own Church. But even this harm was, we think, counteracted by the criticisms which " Catholic Freemason" received at the hands of his more orthodox and loyal brethren.

(30) *One objection more. The first papal condemnations of Freemasonry were made long before the papal infallibility was defined; hence those condemnations could not be infallible.*

Answer.—As you say, the first papal declaration was made in 1738, and all of them but one were issued before the Vatican Council of 1870. Hence only that of Leo XIII in 1884 comes after the definition of infallibility. However the objection is of no weight. The definition of 1870 did not *make* the Pope infallible. He was infallible all the time from St. Peter downwards; and the truth was believed in the Church before the definition, which merely put a closure on all further discussion. Hence papal definitions made before 1870 were just as infallible as those made after it. However, our appeal in this matter is not so much to papal infallibility. Even putting infallibility aside, the Pope has a right to impose orders on the faithful in matters of grave import; and it is our business to obey him when he does so. As far as outsiders are concerned, our appeal is rather to the reasons why Freemasonry is condemned. If they do not appreciate those reasons we can hardly help it. We cannot enforce agreement; but we can at least try to make our position unmistakably clear.

III.

THE LEO TAXIL AFFAIR.

(Examiner, October 6th, 1906).

The current *English Mail* referring to the Masonic-rites question, delivered itself as follows :—

"The Church's charge against secret societies is, we believe, a general one, but its fulminations are never visited on Good Templars, Buffaloes, or any of the other numerous bodies that hold secret conclaves. There is probably a reason for this, quite distinct from the comparative importance of Masonry, and this reason is plausibly asserted to be the natural resentment at having been hoaxed. His Holiness Pope Pius the Ninth was the spiritual potentate who put Masons out of the pale of salvation, and his stern and uncompromising denunciation of the Craft was due in no small measure to the writings of a French journalist of the period. This individual, whose imagination was even more remarkable than his gross lying, kept the ball rolling for years in the French press with fanciful "disclosures" of Masonic doings—which according to him, included raising the devil and making human sacrifices. At last he was cornered beyond further subterfuge, and he callously told an assembly of eager reporters that he appeared before them in the character of a murderer—one who was about to slay the child of his imagination. At the end of a brief history of his great hoax he was escorted to his hotel under protection of the police !

"It was owing to this practical joker, who found a credulous audience at the Vatican, that Masonry was so vigorously condemned ; and the feeling against the Craft in the Church is not so much a conviction that

Masons are in any way unworthy, as a lingering resentment at having been fooled, and a natural dislike to acknowledge that a Papal decree could be so laughably superfluous. This aspect of the matter, of course, is not admitted by any good Catholic, but it is at least a plausible explanation of an otherwise inexplicable phenomenon." [So far the *English Mail*].

The writer's contention therefore is :—First, that it is Pius IX who is responsible for the Catholic attitude regarding Freemasonry. Secondly, that his policy was due to a "natural resentment at having been hoaxed" by a French journalist. Both points are hopelessly inaccurate. In the first place, Pius IX far from inaugurating a new policy regarding the Freemasons, merely continued that of his predecessors for more than a century before. As early as 1738, Pope Clement XII pronounced a condemnation on the Order. This was confirmed in 1751 by Benedict XIV. A similar condemnation was repeated by Pius VII in 1821, by Leo XII in 1826, Pius VIII in 1829 and Gregory XVI in 1832; while Pius IX in 1846 and 1864 merely confirmed the sentence already so often repeated—and which was in the last instance ratified once more by Leo XIII in 1884.

Secondly, as regards the "French journalist and his revelations." By the "French journalist" I suppose he means Leo Taxil. Let us therefore put down some of the facts relating to this gentleman. According to his autobiography (Une Chute et une Conversion, 1890), he was born in 1854, *eight years after* Pius IX had uttered his first denunciation of Freemasonry. He was a devout child of ten when Pius IX published his second *and last* condemnation in 1864. He went to the bad at the age of 14, and began to write against religion in about 1870; that is, *six years after the second*

and last condemnation. One of his early works was an attack on Pius IX ; but it appeared long after that Pope had uttered his last word on Freemasonry. Pius IX died in 1878, and was succeeded by Leo XIII. The new Pope repeated the condemnation of his predecessors in 1884. The next year (1885) Leo Taxil tells us that he was "converted." After his conversion he began to publish his bogus "exposures of Freemasonry"—with the express motive, as he himself declared, of "seeing how credulous Catholics were on the subject." The Papal Encyclical of 1884 had actually suggested the hoax, instead of the hoax suggesting the Encyclical ! In 1886 Leo Taxil published his "Full exposure of Freemasonry." In 1890 followed his autobiography. In October 1896 "Diana Vaughan" was on the horizon, and her merits were under discussion in the *Tablet.* On April 19th 1897 she promised to show herself in public. On that day Leo Taxil appeared in her place, and acknowledged his fraud. (Cf. *Tablet*, April 24th, 1897). It is true that the Pope was taken in, amongst many others, for a time. But the Pope in question was not Pius IX, *who had died nearly twenty years before.* It was Leo XIII. Yet even Leo XIII had published his condemnation of Freemasonry *one year before* Leo Taxil began his hoax, and *twelve years before* the Diana Vaughan fraud was inaugurated. Hence the contention of the *English Mail* is nothing short of a ridiculous travesty of the facts of history.

Was Pius IX a Freemason ?

It will be useful to put on record the following item taken from the *Masonic Record of Western India,* September 1894 :—

POPE PIUS IX. EXPELLED FROM THE ORDER FOR PERJURY.

At the semi-annual meeting of the Grand Lodge of

Masons, Scottish Rite of the Orient, of Palermo, Italy, held in that city on the 27th of March, Mastai Ferretti was expelled from the Order for violating his vows and for perjury. Mastai Ferretti is no other person than Pius IX., Pope of Rome. The decree of the Lodge at Palermo is published in the official paper of the Order of Freemasons at Cologne, Germany, and dated March 27. It is preceded by the minutes of the Lodge in which Mastai Ferretti, in 1826, was initiated into the Order under the old Scottish Rite. The decree reads as follows :—

"A man called Mastai Ferretti, who received the baptism of Freemasonry and solemnly pledged his love and fellowship, and who afterwards was crowned Pope and King, under the title of Pio Nino, has now cursed his former brethren and excommunicated all members of the Order of Freemasons. Therefore, said Mastai Ferretti is herewith, by decree of the Grand Lodge of the Orient, Palermo, expelled from the Order for perjury."

The charges against Mastai Ferretti were first preferred in his lodge at Palermo, in 1865, and notification and copy thereof sent to Rome, with a request to attend the lodge for the purpose of his vindication. To this the Pope made no reply, and for divers reasons the charges were not pressed until the Pope urged the clergy of Brazil to aggressive measures against the Freemasons in that country. Then the charges were pressed, and the second and third notifications sent, and after a formal trial, a decree of expulsion was entered, and caused to be published. The decree bears the signature of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, Grand Master of the Orient of Italy.—*Masonic News.*

Our second cutting is from the *Catholic Fortnightly*

Review of July 1st 1906 :—

WERE BENEDICT XIV. AND PIUS IX. FREEMASONS ?

It is asserted in the *New Age* (a Masonic Magazine, Jan. 1905, pp. 81-82) that Benedict XIV, and Pius IX. were Freemasons.

"It is related by Lenning in his German Freemason's Lexicon, that after Pope Benedict XIV. had confirmed the Bull of Pope Clement XII., his predecessor, against the Freemasons, one of his courtiers, a zealous Freemason, induced him to be privately initiated into the Order. A Roman Mason named Tripolo delivered an address at the Pope's reception into the Order, and it is a fact that during the latter part of his pontificate, the enlightened and liberal Pope *did* cease to persecute the Freemasons, thus lending strong support to Lenning's statements."

Again :

"Pope Pius IX, was a Freemason, and if Bishop Le Nordez, of Dijon, is really a member of the fraternity, he has only followed the lead of high dignitaries of his own Church."

And the inevitable conclusion :

"If the popes and bishops can be Masons, why should not the members of the same Church join the society ?"

As to the story of Lenning, considered merely from the standpoint of history, and apart from any theological questions involved—for the embracing of Masonry is apostasy from the faith—everybody can easily see that it is of no historic value whatever. "A certain courtier," " a Roman Mason named Tripolo," are too indefinite to constitute proofs of a fact which, were it true, would not have been allowed to moulder in the forgotten pages of Lenning. Here is what Dr. Albert G. Mackey, one of the leading American Masonic writers,

says of Benedict XIV. in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (p. 113): "He was distinguished for his learning and was a great encourager of the arts and sciences. He was, however, an implacable enemy of secret societies, and issued on the 18th of May, 1751, his celebrated Bull renewing and perpetuating that of his predecessor which excommunicated the Freemasons." The Doctor is a little late in the date, but that may be considered a clerical error. The Bull was signed on May 13 and published on May 28. (Bullarium Benedict XIV., vol. iii, p. 286).

But though a slight error has crept in as regards the date, there is no error as regards the sentiments of the Holy Father. The Bull was published in the eleventh year of a reign which lasted only seventeen years, eight months, and sixteen days, and the Pope was then already seventy-six years old.

This was the Pontiff who, between the years of seventy-six and eighty-two, after so solemn and public a proclamation, which he declared *perpetual*, is said to have been induced by an unnamed courtier to join the Masonic fraternity. Meanwhile leaving this solemn universal condemnation in full force !!! We are glad Dr. Mackey has more respect for the intelligence of his readers!

The story of the sainted Pius IX., is cut from the same cloth. "It started in Germany," says John Gilmary Shea, in his *Life of Pope Pius IX* (pp. 291-292), "and they thought that by putting the scene in America, they would escape detection. They declared positively that Pius IX. had been received into a Masonic lodge in Philadelphia, cited his discourses, and declared that a number of his autographs were preserved in the lodge. Unfortunately for the story, Philadelphia is in the civilized world. People there could read and write.

They examined and found that there was no Masonic lodge in that city by the name given; they found that no lodge in Philadelphia had ever received John Mary Mastai; they could find no trace of his ever having been there, as he never was; that no lodge had any of his autograph letters; Masons themselves attested that the whole was a pure invention. The slander thus refuted has been revived from time to time, but in later versions, care is taken not to specify the lodge or city too distinctly."

The fabled time of the Pope's initiation long antedates the famous allocution of September 25, 1865, and even the elevation of John Mary Mastai to the papal throne. But what consolation any of the brethren can gather from imagining Pope Pius IX. to have been a member of a Masonic Order is beyond comprehension.

The logical conclusion could only be that if Pius IX. had been a Freemason he must have been speaking from knowledge of the Order when in his famous allocution of September 25, 1865, he solemnly and publicly condemned Freemasonry.—"The Masonic sect has spread so greatly," says he, "that it now shows itself everywhere with impunity and raises its head more boldly than ever. We have deemed it necessary to speak again on this subject, because some people, through ignorance, falsely imagine that said society is harmless, and that the members seek only to help their fellowmen in distress and want, and that the Church has nothing to fear from them. But who does not see that this view is wholly foreign to truth? What can be the object of such an association of men of every religion and shade of belief? What is the purpose of those secret meetings and that oath of secrecy so strictly required of every initiate, by which he binds himself never to reveal the doctrines of the

Craft ? And wherefore those fearful penalties, to which the initiates devote themselves (or render themselves liable), in case they are ever untrue to their oath ? Most assuredly a society that thus shuns the light cannot but be both impious and criminal, for, according to the saying of the Apostle, 'he that doth evil hateth the light.'

IV.

MASONIC CHARITY.

(Examiner, June 29th, 1907).

Sir,—I was much impressed by the unkindness of your thrust at the Brotherhood on their want of charity to those outside their order ; and so I send you a report of the *Lahore Stranger's Home Society* which speaks volumes against your assertion ; and I take it that this is only one of many other cases where this Brotherhood testifies to the Catholic character of their charity.

Yours faithfully,
[Signed].

Comment on the foregoing letter.

The words to which our correspondent refers are the following :—"*As far as we know*, Masonry *normally* exercises charity only to its own members, their widows, etc. ; and is therefore more of a Mutual Aid Society than a Benevolent Society. There *need* be no more charity in it than there is in a Burial or Provident Fund, where in return for a fixed subscription you receive support during sickness for self and family, etc." [*Italics ours*].

Now obviously this statement was never intended to mean that individual members of the Freemasonic Order are not addicted to charity—for some of them certainly are. Nor does it mean that collections for charitable purposes are never got up by the members of particular Lodges—for they sometimes are. What the passages did mean was that the charitable department of Freemasonry *as such, according to its own published constitutions*, is of an exclusive type, confined in its application to actual members of the Order, their widows, children, etc., and this only on certain conditions which turn it into a Mutual Aid Society or Provident Society rather than a Charitable Society.

This we believe to be the case, on the following grounds :—

(1) In the *Constitutions of the Free and Accepted Masons* (Edition 1867) there occurs a chapter headed "*Of the Fund of Benevolence*" (p. 96-103). It lays down the amount which each member has to subscribe, the persons who are eligible to receive benefit from it, and the conditions on which the benefit will be given. The rules do not entertain for one moment the idea of applying this fund to the outside public. The persons primarily to be relieved are actual members of the Freemasonic Order. The petitioner must state the name and number of the Lodge in which he has been initiated, and must sign the petition personally unless disabled by disease or accident. Some official must visit the petitioner at his own residence so as to certify to the truth of his statements put forward in the petition. A brother who has been once relieved cannot petition a second time within one year. No Mason initiated under the constitution of the Grand Lodge of England can receive the benefit of this fund unless he

has paid the full consideration-fee, and has continued a subscribing member for at least two years, and during that period paid his quarterly dues to the fund of benevolence. Moreover, no petition shall be read unless the petitioner attend the committee in person, except in case of sickness, lameness, imprisonment or residence out-of-town. Petitions must be recommended by certifying that "the petitioner has been a regular contributing member for so many years, and that we have known him in reputable circumstances, and that the allegations set forth in the petition are true." When the case has been proved satisfactorily, "the committee may order the payment of any sum not exceeding ten pounds towards the relief of a distressed brother."

The committee may also grant any sum not exceeding five pounds towards the relief of the indigent widow or child of a deceased Mason who would himself have been qualified to receive assistance; or of a brother who has died within two years from the period of his initiation and continued a subscribing member to his death. If the children are totally dependant on the widow, or if there be more than one orphan, the sum may be extended to ten pounds; but the application must be made within two years of the death of the father. In very extraordinary cases the sum may be (by the grand master) extended to twenty pounds or (by a grand lodge) even as far as fifty pounds. On no pretence are any of these rules to be infringed. There is not a word here or elsewhere contemplating the extension of benevolence to non-Masons or to the general community, and the whole organisation is precisely that of a Mutual Benefit or Provident Society and nothing more.

(2) This evidence of the Masonic constitutions is borne out by my personal experience in the following

way. For five years I was on intimate terms with an English Freemason, and I used regularly to see the notices of business to be transacted in the meetings he used to attend. They were always the same—to consider the petition of Brother *So and so*, or some other case of the widow or child or Brother *So and so*, deceased—never a single word about contributions to any public or private charity outside the Order.

So far for Freemasonic charity as such, and as contained in the constitutions of the Order. This does not of course prevent the members of a particular Lodge, *in an extra-official manner*, getting up a subscription among themselves for some local charity, and having the same put down as a contribution from *Lodge So and so*. But such charity is not the charity of the Masonic Order as such.

This is just what seems to have happened in the case of the Lahore Stranger's Home Society whose report our correspondent sends us. Looking over the list we find a total of Rs. 11,065 from which must be deducted the previous balance of Rs. 7,000 and a "transfer" of Rs. 1,500. This leaves an actual subscription list of Rs. 2,565. Among the subscribers we find one "Lodge" contributing Rs. 16, two others Rs. 50 each, three others Rs. 25 each, one other Rs. 36, and one "Chapter" Rs. 50, making up a sum-total of Rs. 277; while the remainder, that is to say Rs. 2,288, is subscribed by the general public in various sums ranging from Rs. 1,000 to Re. 1—many of the single individuals contributing more than any of the Lodges taken singly. Now it will be seen from these figures that, even if the moneys *were* contributed by the Masonic Lodges constitutionally and as such, the results would hardly be grand enough to crow over. But if, as we venture to

suppose, these contributions were raised by extra-official collection made among the members, and not drawn from the Benevolent Fund of the Freemasons as such, the instance which our correspondent brings up for our refutation does not in any way touch our contention; viz., that the benevolence of the Freemasonic Order as such, according to its official constitution, is not charity in the proper sense of the word but is of the sort proper to a Mutual Aid Society or Benevolent Society.

V.

THE SECRET OF FREEMASONRY.

(Examiner, Oct. 10th, 1908).

A Study in American Freemasonry, based on Pyke's *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite;* Mackey's *Masonic Ritualist;* The *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, and other American Masonic Standard Works. By Arthur Preuss, Editor of the *Catholic Fortnightly Review.* St. Louis : B. Herder, 1908. Price $ 1-50.

The title "American Freemasonry" is evidently adopted by way of caution, because the works made use of are all published in America. The Freemasonry they contain, however, is not anything local or peculiar, but substantially representative of the Order taken as a whole.

All the Freemasonic literature we have ever seen is of the same type, chiefly made up from smatterings of Cabbalistic and Gnostic lore and more than fantastic

legend. The only question is, whether it ought to be taken seriously? So far we have never succeeded in this. It seems to us the outcome of a certain morbid instinct for the mysterious with nothing at the back of it—the same instinct which in its natural form makes children delight in ghost stories and fairy tales; underground passages and hidden mysteries; spells, charms and talismans; dead hands and spells of fate; wizards, witches and the rest—and which, among children of a larger growth, leads to dabblings in spiritism and hypnotics. It is partly at least by pandering to this deep-seated instinct, that Freemasonry draws so large a percentage of the human race under its sway—so much so, that if it would once abandon its profession of secrecy and divest itself of all mystery, we really believe that it would cease to be the numerous body it is.

The literature of Freemasonry seems to have for its chief object to foster and cherish this idea of mysteriousness which is so potent a factor in its influence. "Part seen, imagine part," would seem to be the motto of the writers. By perusing the very able summary of Masonic teaching presented to us in this volume, we should fancy ourselves to know all about it. But when, at the same time, we are told that the real secrets of Freemasonry are strictly reserved to the initiated, the only conclusion suggested by the seeming inconsistence is this:—Either there is no real secret in Freemasonry at all, or else this literature is pure humbug from beginning to end. Our personal belief in the matter is that both these conclusions are true but in different ways. The mysteries of Freemasonry as revealed in Masonic literature are real in the sense that the ideas and ritual

practices described really belong to it; but at the same time they are merely so much food for the mystery-loving instinct of humanity, so much bait held out to credulous mankind. If there is any secret hidden behind this mummery, it is a secret which has nothing to do with the mummery itself. We feel inclined to believe that the real secret, so far as it exists, is neither doctrinal nor ritual, but consists in that particular political or religious policy which the leaders of the order happen in any given country to espouse—a policy which may vary at different times and in different places. In short, the membership of Freemasonry is first created, partly at least, by appealing to a morbid curiosity and a love of the mysterious; and being thus created, it becomes available for the use of the leaders in any direction is which they may choose to direct it. The ritual mystery is, in short, merely a means for securing influence over a large body of men, for ulterior ends known only to the few, and manifested to the rest just so far as the exigencies of the case require.

This conclusion seems to follow from the perusal of Masonic literature, and from the irreconcilable inconsistency which that literature embodies. The lengthy and detailed account which Freemasonry gives of itself *may* perhaps be utterly misleading. Such we should expect it to be in case of a body which in one breath professes to have a secret, and in the next breath tells us with the utmost ingenuousness what that secret is. By accepting Masonry's ostensible account of itself, however, we can at least formulate an *argumentum ad hominem* more or less as follows:—"Whatever Freemasonry may be in its hidden and secret essence, this at least is what you give it out to be. Whatever may be the

ideas you instil into the minds of the deeper initiates, at least this much you profess to instil into the minds of all. Freemasonry beyond this may be for the better or for the worse; but this much at least you solemnly assure us that it is. Let us then take Freemasonry as you present it to us, and sit in judgment on it. Having examined your account in detail, we can arrive at our verdict; and that verdict can only be, from the Christian point of view at least, an unqualified condemnation."

Such is implicitly the method, and explicitly the outcome of the work before us. From six standard Masonic treatises, enumerated at the beginning, the author picks out the main points of interest. Some of them are so childish that it is a wonder the author has deigned to take them seriously. He should have let his sense of humour loose on them, and laughed them out of court by holding up their intrinsic absurdity. This is sometimes done, but too sparingly.

Culling from the book a few main points we come to these results :—

(1) The idea that Freemasonry is merely a social and benevolent society of an unsectarian character, though often put forward, will not stand examination. It breaks down at once on consulting Masonic literature, and seems if anything to reveal the simplicity of those who believe it.

(2) This literature loudly professes that Freemasonry has a secret in reserve for its initiates; and the preservation and due communication of this secret belongs to its essential constitution.

(3) This secret is declared to be "a system of morality veiled in allegories and symbols." Where the objects made use of are Christian, they are intend-

ed in allegorical sense different from the Christian sense, and embody ideas and doctrines alien to and even antagonistic to the tenets of Christianity. Those not properly initiated into these occult meanings are misled into thinking Masonry more Christian than it really is.

(4) The communication of the Masonic secret involves a shock to the recipient. It professes to contain some new light which is, or may be, revolutionary of his conventional ideas. These old ideas are to be left behind and abandoned in favour of the new, as error is abandoned on the attainment of truth. This system of truth concerns the nature and essence of God and of the human soul.

(5) The secret of Masonry is thus a system of religious belief with a ritual embodying this belief, and therefore a religion. It does not however assume a place *among* the sects. It professes to be *above* them all, and looks complacently upon them all, because it knows itself to be the one true religion, while all the sects are corruptions and perversions of the same.

(6) This religion is certainly not Christianity, which is to be ranked among the rest as a corruption. It harks back to pre-Christian times, to the ideas and systems of paganism, and specially the mysteries of sun worship, phallus worship, etc. Its symbolism is largely phallic. It asserts the male and female principle in the deity ; the origin of the world by emanation and not by creation ; the essential divinity of man, who is the true God-incarnate. The elements of this system are drawn promiscuously from Hindu emanative pantheism, the gnostic system of Æons, and above all the Jewish Cabbala. The whole is wrapped up in a complexity of symbolic figures (the triangle, the circle, the

point, etc.) and a maze of mystic interpretations of the letters of the alphabet, etc., according to the Cabbalistic method. The trichotomy of body, soul and spirit is adopted according to the Hindu and the gnostic systems...The spirit is essentially divine, and eternal before and after, and is uncontaminated by the actions of the body, etc.

(7) Although the Bible is honoured, this is only as "covered by the square and compasses," that is to say, interpreted symbolically according to the Masonic system. Its orthodox Christian significance is rejected.

(8) The principles of morality shown forth in Masonic literature are such as no Christian could admit, and Masonic benevolence is so narrowed down as to be hardly worthy of the name. Masonic history before the year 1717 is so much fiction, as there is no evidence of its existence before that date. Finally, the solidarity of the Freemasons throughout the world is a fact which cannot be denied.

These outlines will only inadequately show the value of the work. Except for the disgust one feels at the nonsensical character of some parts of the Masonic exposition, the work will be read with pleasure and absorbing interest, as well as with satisfaction at seeing how well it has been done. The editor of the *Catholic Fortnightly Review* deserves sincere congratulations on his achievement.

IV.

HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF FREEMASONRY.

(Examiner, June 13th, 1903).

It seems that Freemasonry (in the sense in which we now use the word) dates back no further than the year 1717, when the first Lodge was founded in London.

Whether this Lodge had *any* connection with the mediæval Mason guilds before the year 1717, so as to claim continuity with them, as a matter open to much dispute [Cf. Cowen, *X-Rays in Freemasonry;* Scott, *Cathedral Builders:* Preuss, *American Freemasonry, for* opposing views]. But even if the connection be admitted the mediæval guilds were real artizans' guilds, with no motive except mutual aid and fellowship among the working classes; and the secrets preserved were then nothing but certain trade secrets (analogous to the secret for making Chartreuse)—whereas in the year 1717 a new epoch was inaugurated and a new society formed—new in the sense of modifying the scope and aims of the union and the nature of the secret. Finally this new Masonic guild became a factor in the religious and political movements of the time—which the old tradesmen's guild was not.

By the year 1730 the number of Lodges in and about London had grown to 130, while 55 had sprung up in Wales. In 1725 the first Lodge on the continent was opened at Paris. One was founded at Dublin in 1730; another in Florence in 1733. The same year saw the beginnings of Freemasonry in America. After that date it spread over into Holland, Sweden, Scotland,

Po and, etc., and assumed the nature of a world-wide organisation.

Of the nature of this organisation we know enough to recognise its identity with the modern Masonic sect taken as a whole. Its spirit was it seems deistic rather than atheistic. It tended to promote indifferentism under the cover of political tolerance, and its members were bound by an unconditioned oath of obedience and secrecy. That the institute was at once regarded by the Church as mischievous or immoral in principle or in practice is evident from the fact that twenty years after its foundation it was condemned by Pope Clement XII (1738). This condemnation was repeated by Benedict XIV in 1751.

During the 19th century the number of Lodges had grown to such an extent that in 1866 there were estimated to be 70 Grand Lodges, round which about 7,300 simple Lodges were grouped. Out of these many were in Protestant countries. There were 4,000 in North America, 1,700 in Great Britain, 311 in the Protestant parts of Germany. About 1858 and later there was a strong growth of Freemasonry in certain Catholic countries, as France, Spain, Italy, and Belgium. During the same period the Popes almost all reiterated their condemnations, e.g., Pius VII in 1821, Leo XII in 1826, Gregory XVI in 1832, Pius IX in 1865 and Leo XIII in 1884; which Pontiffs, repeatedly condemning all secret societies in general and the Masonic in particular, proscribed its members and excommunicated its supporters. The Freemasons have from their very beginning been associated to some extent with anti-Catholic principles; but in more recent times they are recognised to have been active promoters of the socialist, anarchist, and generally anti-religious movements which have

taken place in Europe—such as the Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese revolutions, and the anti-clerical campaigns in each of these countries.

Such in brief outline seems to be the authentic history of the Masonic institute. Now we pass from fact to fiction, and to a kind of literature which may be described as the Historico-Mythology of Freemasonry.

Instead of recognising the recent origin of the Society, writers in this line weave together a fanciful history of Masonry; pretending that from the beginning of the world, or at least from before the flood, the secret sect of the Freemasons was in existence. The method for constructing this wonderful history is simple enough. Just as the Horticultural Society might trace back its own existence to the garden of Eden, because forsooth Adam was a gardener; just as they might continue their records from this date by collecting from ancient history every mention of gardens and gardening and gardeners, and saying that all these records refer to the Horticultural Society already existing in those remote ages—so the Freemason historian compiles a history of architecture and building from the earliest ages, and ascribes it all to the society of the Freemasons. Freemasons built the ark of Noah; Freemasons projected the tower of Babel and superintended its construction; Freemasons built the Tabernacle in the wilderness and designed the breast-plate of Aaron; Freemasons built Solomon's Temple—in fact Solomon himself was one of their Grand Masters; Freemasons erected the walls of Jerusalem. After these antecedents it was in its gray old age that Freemasonry built the mediæval cathedrals—the mediæval trades-guilds being Masonic, etc., etc.

Of course we need not go carefully into this Masonic mythology, as we do not suppose anyone educated in

general history can believe anything so ridiculous. We only mention it in passing as one of the accompaniments almost invariably associated with the idea of a secret society or any esoteric clique—Theosophism providing another example of the same thing. By assuming a secret character, they are irresistibly tempted to run into historical romancing about their past; and think they can safely do so, just because *being secret* in their constitution they can defy all criticism. To all historical investigation they of course triumphantly retort, that exoteric history does not provide data which belongs only to the esoteric circle, and therefore is not committed to written documents in the past.

Masonic Fables.

Intelligent Masons are becoming ashamed of the assertion, found in so many of their standard books, that Freemasonry is of ancient origin, and of the tales that are told to make the craft appear more important than it is. In the " Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Nevada for 1920, p. 66, is quoted the following sober statement by Grand Master Lindsay, of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina (we are indebted for the quotation to the *Christian Cynosure*, Chicago, Vol. LIV, No. 2, p. 50 sq.):

" If there were just some way to weed out all the fool fables which often render ridiculous the noble Order of Masonry, it would be better for the standing of the fraternity. No fault should be found with the allegorical teaching included, but when orators of supposed intelligence gravely tell the gullible multitude at Masonic picnics and on other public occasions that Masonic lodges were in operation before the Deluge, that our present Ritual has been handed down from the

days of King Solomon, that there has never been a president of the United States who was not a Mason, that all signers of the Declaration of Independence were Masons, except Benedict Arnold, who, by the way, was a Mason, it is enough to make an Egyptian mummy laugh. The writer once heard a much-travelled visiting Brother seriously declare in a lodge at Raleigh that he had visited lodges in India which had records running back six thousand years. Ananias and Baron Munchhausen were paragons of veracity as compared with that Brother."—*Observer, in Fortnightly Review*, July 1, 1921.

VII.

ENGLISH AND CONTINENTAL MASONRY.

(Examiner, Oct. 12th, 1907).

The objection most commonly raised against the Catholic attitude is that we tend to ignore the difference between the pacific and in some way "pious" and non-political character of English Masonry, and the polemical, impious and political character of continental Masonry. The reading of this pamphlet should, however, suffice to show that the difference between English and Continental Masonry, in the practical region both of religion and of politics, is fully acknowledged. We have expressly declared in one place that "even if we should pass over this point when dealing with English Freemasonry, the *other three* reasons remain applicable to English Masonry in their full force." Out of these

three reasons, those of secrecy of aim and the secret oath can also for argument's sake be entirely put aside, and the whole case made to stand on one reason only—that which we put first in the list, and which runs as follows :—"English Freemasonry is, we maintain, a religious institution embodying theological principles which are opposed to Catholic principles ; *and for that reason taken alone* Catholics can have no more to do with English Masonry than they can have to do with English Unitarianism" (p. 28).

This is a point hardly needing the space which we devoted to it, as it is freely admitted in the constitutions of the Order, and in the official and semi-official literature of the subject. It will however be of interest to insert here an incidental confirmation which reaches us from the English papers, and which also throws some sidelight on the condition of Masonry in France.

The *Catholic Herald of India* of July 24th wrote as follows :—

"The Dean of Gloucester—[himself a prominent Freemason]—delivered recently a sermon in his cathedral at the annual festival of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the country. After speaking of the satisfaction which such a goodly gathering of his brother Masons gave him as a witness to the fact that "the corner-stone of English Masonry is the belief that 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,'" he went on to express his regret that "one great division of the Masonic brotherhood"—please, mark this, the assertion of brotherhood between the English and French branches—"has now ranged itself formally and openly with the declared enemies of Christianity, ranking themselves with no mere agnostics, doubters and enquirers, but with the bitter and remorseless foes of the religion

which alone can make a country, as it has done our England, free and great and strong. It is the deliberate conviction of grave and thoughtful men that Masonry, a powerful order in France, our well-loved neighbour, is the seat and home of that bitter, relentless infidelity which is working such terrible havoc, which is gravely threatening the peace and well-being of that glorious France our friend... For a time the trouble which has grown between the Church and State in France was not much heeded, still less commented upon, in England. Many of us were grieved, but we grieved silently. It was emphatically not our concern. Gradually the veil was lifted, and we saw the feud was based upon graver issues. Separation between Church and State has something sinister behind it, a grim spectre of intense hostility to revealed religion, to Christianity in any form."

"The Dean recited some of the terms of the anti-religious programme already accomplished in France, and quoted the Archbishop of Westminster as showing that thoughtful men ascribed 'these grave and awful acts to the influence of the powerful order of Freemasons.' Finally, the preacher warned his brethren of the Craft to save their order from the leprosy of irreligion. In conclusion he said: 'I believe our Masonic Order has yet to play a great and very noble part. Our order—does it not, Brothers?—our order now in England rests upon religion. Never is an English Lodge opened without prayer; never closed without asking the Almighty Architect to shield us, help us, bless us.' In every Lodge, the chief ornament is the Bible. Englishmen were known in past days as the 'Men of the Book.' Let us Masons jealously, proudly claim the grand old title given us in the days of Elizabeth and James as our own to-day. We, too, would be

known far and wide *par excellence* as 'Men of the book.' "

"We record this important testimony to the religious character of the Craft, so publicly uttered by one in authority, as a further argument, if required, against such as would deem themselves Catholics and yet be Masons. 'Our Order now in England rests upon religion.' Surely not on the Catholic religion. If a Catholic's duty is not to participate in religious ceremonies which are not those of his Church, where is the place for him in the Masonic Order which rests upon a religion other than his own, in a Masonic Lodge which is never opened without prayer, and never closed without invoking the Almighty Architect ?"

A DIALOGUE.

Thus far the *Catholic Herald.* It will be well however to take the present opportunity of rubbing in the Catholic principles a little more. The following dialogue between a Catholic priest and a non-Catholic layman will perhaps best illustrate the idea :—

Layman.—"Sir, though I entertain a great respect for the members of your cloth, I cannot help thinking that you have quite a mistaken idea about English Freemasons."

Priest.—"May I in return venture to remark that I do not think we have a mistaken idea about them at all."

Layman.—"Well, this is my point. You do not seem to understand the difference between the English and the French, or Italian, or other Continental Masonry. I know that they are anti-religious and anti-Catholic, and deserve all the condemnation they receive. But English Masonry is quite different."

Priest.—"We perfectly well understand the difference. We even know that the English Masons have repudiated the French Grand Orient on account of its

atheism and interference with politics. Viewed from this practical standpoint we do not for a moment class English Masons and Continental Masons together. Our objection to English Masonry rests on other grounds which apply to Freemasonry all the world over—no matter whether it be atheistic and political or not."

Layman.—"What then is your objection ?"

Priest.—"Our objection is drawn from the Official constitutions of the Order, which bind English and Continental Masons alike. It is the theological position embodied in those constitutions which we object to."

Layman.—"What do you mean ?"

Priest.—"I mean that Freemasonry, while professing a belief in God, regards as a matter of indifference the idea of Christian revelation. It places Christ on a level with Moses and Mahomet and Buddha and Confucius. It does not acknowledge him as the divine founder of a divinely revealed religion—the one only divine religion in the world."

Layman.—"I admit that fully. But I take a broad-minded view of such matters myself. What does it matter what religion a man professes so long as he does his duty ?"

Priest.—"Yes, that is all very well. It is good that a man should sincerely follow the light of his own conscience and believe and do what seems to him the right thing. But suppose it is a *fact* that God has instituted *one* religion, which he wants all men to embrace as soon as they understand it ? Then surely it *does* matter a great deal whether a man belongs to that religion or not."

Layman.—"Yes, of course. If that were the case, then men ought to profess that religion and abandon all the rest."

Priest.—"Very well: We Catholics maintain that God *has* instituted such a unique and divine religion; namely the Catholic faith. Hence a Catholic, believing as he does, cannot choose but to maintain that religion, and refuse to place it on a level with any other."

Layman.—"From your own standpoint I fully admit your conclusions, but other people do not take the same view."

Priest.—"Of course they do not. Hence when we see non-Catholics becoming Freemasons, we must leave that to them as being their affair and not ours. But when it is a question whether *Catholics* can join the Masonic Order or not, we are bound to answer No. A Catholic cannot join the Freemasons without identifying himself with the principles of the Masonic Order. And since these principles make it a matter of indifference whether a man is Catholic or not, his incorporation into the Masonic body implicitly sacrifices the idea that Catholicism is the one true and divine religion which everybody ought to join, and subscribes to the opposite idea that one religion is as good as another."

Layman.—"Though I do not acknowledge the Catholic claims myself, still I understand now that if they are once admitted your attitude towards Freemasonry follows logically from them. Hence whatever the case may be with non-Catholics, at least no believing Catholic can consistently be a Freemason."

Priest.—"If you recognise that you recognise our essential position. All other points in the discussion are of secondary importance, and can be left aside without affecting the main question."

Layman.—" Then do you give up the other objections altogether ?"

Priest.—"By no means. We still maintain that the secrecy of the Order is objectionable. We still maintain that the oath to preserve that secrecy is objectionable. We still maintain that Continental Masonry is anti-Catholic. We still maintain that if Continental Masonry is condemned on this account, English Masonry ought, on account of the solidarity of the Order all over the world, to fall under the same condemnation —however innocent it may be in itself. In short, all the reasons usually given hold good. But what we say is this:—If these other reasons do not appeal to you, we can leave them aside, and maintain our case on the first reason alone—viz. the fact that Freemasonry is the embodiment of indifferentism, therefore theologically antagonistic to the principles of the Catholic Church."

VIII.

THE DIFFERENCE AND THE CONNECTION.

PURSUING the comparison between English and Continental Freemasonry, there are two questions which call for attention: (1) Is there a difference; and if so, in what does it consist? (2) Is there a connection; and if so, does it amount to such solidarity as to bring English Masonry deservedly under the same condemnation?

THE DIFFERENCE.

With regard to the difference, we cannot do better than summarise an article from the *Southern Cross* (Dec. 2, 1910) which not merely states the difference but goes on to explain the reason of it:—

There can be no doubt that in the Latin countries of Europe, revolution, freemasonry, irreligion and immorality are allied in a war against the Catholic Church. So evident is this that many non-Catholics are not now concerned to deny the evil influence of Freemasonry in Latin lands. They declare, however, that British and Australian Freemasonry is quite a different thing from Continental Freemasonry, and ask how it is that Masonry is so much more aggressive, so much more openly athestic, in Catholic than in Protestent countries.

The reason is readily seen. In the countries which have embraced the principles of the Reformation the work of Freemasonry is already half accomplished. Its principles and its ritual meet with no strong opposition from the Protestant churches. Protestant clergymen actually belong to and act as chaplains of Masonic lodges, though the Masonic ritual is not even Christian.

As an influential Masonic review, the *Latomia*, has expressed it :—"From a religious point of view, Protestantism is one-half of Masonry. It, however, considers the essence of religion as a Divine revelation, and permits to reason only a vain attempt to give form to an object outside its domain. In Masonry, on the contrary, reason has to furnish not only the form, but the very substance of religion. At last Protestantism must either return to Catholicism, or stop in the middle of its course ; or ever progressing, end by adopting the Masonic religion. . . . . There is no medium between belief and disbelief, between being a Catholic or being an atheist."

We are free to admit that Freemasons generally in Australia and in Great Britain have displayed no special hostility to the Catholic Church and have even on

occasions shown kindness and good feeling towards the Church and its charitable institutions. But this fact can make no alteration in the principles on which the Church acts. Even if Freemasonry had never shown itself hostile to religion in Latin lands the Church is bound to condemn it.

The Catholic Church can never sanction its members belonging to a body which excludes belief in the Trinity and in a Redeemer, and which, moreover, sets up a rival ritual of its own. In addition, the Church is compelled to condemn Freemasonry because it is a secret society, whose members are bound by secret oaths. Hence Freemasonry and the Church are every where at war, and the war is especially bitter in Catholic countries.

THE CONNECTION.

With regard to the connection between English and Continental Freemasonry, the *New Zealand Tablet* of November 17th, 1910, sums up the two sides of the contention quite clearly. On the one side, it observes:—

(1) The Grand Lodge of England undoubtedly repudiated official connection with the Grand Orient of France when—in 1877—the latter adopted rank Atheism as its official creed. (2) The English Order—in an informal and decidedly unconvincing way—still disavows connection with the Brotherhood on the Continent. Thus the English *Freemason's Chronicle*, replying in a recent issue to some remarks of the London *Tablet's* Rome correspondent about the activity of Continental Freemasonry, after saying that charges made against Freemasonry as an enemy of the State should be regularly refuted, goes on to point out that—above all—'there would be the great difficulty of proving that the Freemasonry of the Con-

tinent is in any way allied to the ancient Brotherhood working in the British Isles, save in the matter of name; but no official recognition exists, and we of England cannot do more than repeat what has often been said before, that the Craft of Freemasonry—as we know and practise it—has no rivalry to any particular Church or form of religion, requiring only an expression of belief in a Supreme Being, and certainly has no sympathy with those who conspire against State or Government.' (3) It may be admitted that English and American Freemasonry wages no open war upon religion, and that there are great bodies of Freemasons in the lodges in these countries who are as far from the mind and spirit of their Continental *confreres* as pole is from pole. The same remark applies in general to men of high station and character who join the association. On the Continent, and presumably in English-speaking countries too, such men pass their lives in the lower degrees. So much at least we learn from the noted Paris Freemason, Louis Blanc. As another well known author puts it, 'they know no more of the real principles of Freemasonry than the figure-head of a ship knows about the steering.'

But having acknowledged so much, there are a few facts on the contra side which we do well to bear in mind. (*a*) The lodges of Belgium, Bohemia, Holland, Italy, Denmark, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, India, and America owe their origin to England, at dates and in circumstances of which we have a record; (*b*) the Grand Lodge of England recognises the Grand Lodges of Berlin, Hamburg, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Portugal, Hungary, Greece, and the Ancient and Accepted Rite of France some of which are in open

war against the Church, and all of which are in communion with the French Grand Orient, despite the fact that it officially repudiates belief in the existence of God and in the immortality of the soul; (*c*) the English Freemasons gave 'official recognition' to the Italian Brethren in 1875, as we learn from the following paragraph from the London *Times* of July 19, 1875:—"The announcement was made at the consecration of a new lodge, named after the Prince of Wales, at the Alexandra Palace, that his Royal Highness, the Grand Master of English Freemasons, had given official recognition to the Grand Orient of Italy; and the announcement was received with warm applause by the large body of eminent Freemasons assembled on the occasion;" (*d*) the English Freemasons have, so far as we are aware, never uttered a word of condemnation against the long and savage warfare waged by either their Italian or French or Spanish *confreres* against the Catholic Church, and, indeed, against all religion. The extent, in fine, of the difference between English and Continental Freemasonry in their attitude towards the Churches and Christianity has been very fairly stated in the following passage from a C. T. S. publication on the subject:—'There is a difference (between the English and the foreign Freemasonry) it is true, and it is this: the one ignores what the other hates; the English Freemason, clerical or otherwise, officially treats Christianity as sectarianism; the foreign, as a mischievous superstition. The unblinking eye of collective Freemasonry is united and identical, or it could not be, as it is, an international and universal brotherhood.'

Hence we find the Grand Master of English Masonry—the Duke of Connaught—in replying to ad-

dresses presented to him at Cape Town by Masonic brethren of various "Constitutions," referring "to the common brotherhood of Freemasons of every nationality and under all circumstances." Surely "every nationality" must include the French Grand Orient and the 1,300 foreign lodges that it controls. This seems to be another proof of the solidarity of Freemasonry all over the world.

A CLINCHING STATEMENT.

Most clinching however is the statement of an Ex-Grand Master—a M. Edward Quartier-la-Tente, —who directs the operations of a central office styled the "International Bureau of Masonic Relations." In 1908, writing in the name and with the authority of the Bureau to the regular groups of Universal Masonry, he delivered himself of the following statement :—"We have ascertained by a serious study of Masonry of its history in each country, of its rituals and its usages, as of its labours and organisations, that between all the Grand Orients and Grand Lodges, sprung from the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, there is a likeness in principles, symbols, customs and spirit, which demonstrates that all the regular Masonic Associations have come of the same origin, pursue substantially the same ends, and hold to the same aspirations. In all Masonic activity, wheresoever organised, there is a common stock of ideas, a likeness of forms which demonstrate identity of origin, and bear witness that all its adherents are of the same family."—*S. Cross*, December 2, 1910.

A REPUDIATION REPUDIATED.

It is difficult to imagine what further evidence is required to establish the solidarity of Freemasonry all over the world. One small cutting, however, may be

added, which knocks entirely on the head that favourite argument about the English repudiation of the Grand Orient of France. Such a repudiation, sincere enough no doubt thirty-five years ago, has by this time been relegated to the region of archeology. For in the *American Freemason* of February 1913 we are informed that the result of the meeting of the International Masonic Club, held in London on November 15, was the conclusion: '1. That the Grand Orient of France, with regard to religious tests, is much nearer to the original plan of Masonry, as set forth in the first Constitutions, than is the Grand Lodge of England. 2. That the French Masons are worthy men, doing a wonderful work for the cause of progress and enlightenment.' 'As a matter of fact,' continues the writer, 'French Freemasonry has ever since 1878 been steadily growing more intelligent and scholarly, more compact, more serene, more self-confident, more effective, and more elevated. At this day it is the model for all the world in respect to these qualities. There is no American jurisdiction that can compare with it.'—*N. Z. T.*, April 3, 1913.

IX.

FREEMASONRY AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THAT Continental Freemasonry is the declared enemy of the Catholic Church is a fact so notorious that no fairly informed person can be expected to deny it. But the ground of principles on which that hostility rests is not as a rule so clearly defined, and may vary in various countries. We happen, however, to have gathered two declarations, one from Germany, the other from Switzerland, which go some way towards putting the anti-Catholic relation on a clear basis :—

SWITZERLAND.

The *American Freemason*, dated February 1913, published a summary of a circular letter sent out by a number of Freemasons who participated in the recent International Peace Congress at Geneva. The editor calls attention to the fact that 'it is signed first by Brother Maghalaes Lima, *Grand Master of Portuguese Masons, and one of the principles among those concerned in the deposition of royalty in his home country, and in establishment of the Lusitanian republic.* The circular is at once a warning and an appeal. It sets forth what are alleged to be the designs of the Roman Church—to make itself the supreme, even the sole authority, not only in things spiritual, but also in purely temporal affairs. These efforts, says the circular, are adapted to meet every situation : sometimes made openly, defiantly, brutally ; at others proceeding by methods hidden or plausible and Jesuitical. The

unceasing efforts of clericalism, continues the circular, have but one aim—to rehabilitate the Vatican as the seat of a world-power ; to elevate the papacy above all governments. After giving several recent illustrations of priestly intrigue, the framers of the circular call upon Freemasons of all countries to forget their differences that they may unitedly face the common danger. Craftsmen are urged to make such preparation that they may resist clericalism at every point. Only thus can the freedom of conscience, gained by past struggles and sacrifices, be preserved from the destroying hands of bigotry and intolerance.'—*N. Z. T.*, April 3, 1913.

GERMANY.

This declaration, which reminds one of the traditional Protestant "bogey" more than anything else, is not perhaps so illuminative as the following which comes from Germany :—

The *Bauhutte*, the principal Review of the German Freemasons, in its issue of March 31st, 1912, published a series of theses or maxims discussed and voted on at a Masonic Meeting held at Frankfort to consider the admission of Catholics into the order. The most important of the resolutions formulated were as follows :—

"1.—The Catholic Church is one and the same as Ultramontanism and Clericalism. Ultramontanism is the doctirne of the Church applied to life ; Clericalism is the guardian and champion consecrated by the Church.

2.—The Catholic Church is the irreconcilable foe of intellectual culture, that is to say, of civilization. It opposes progress, while Freemasonry favours it as a means of promoting and diffusing intellectual education.

3.—In the much controverted questions of education and human destiny there is open opposition between Freemasonry and the Catholic Church.

4.—If a believing Catholic cannot become a Freemason, it is not because any Lodge will refuse to admit him on account of his faith, for men of all beliefs are admitted; but it is because the laws of his Church forbid it.

5.—It is, nevertheless, true that no sincere Freemason can be a Catholic who can properly be regarded as such. For no Catholic can accept the idea of an emancipated humanity. His faith exacts from him the sacrifice of his intelligence.

6.—Every Catholic who aspires to be a Freemason ought to be warned, before being received, of the ecclesiastical censures with which his Church will strike him. After his reception he must be told that in order to rid himself and his family of annoyances on the part of the clergy, he must declare by his last will and testament that he is to renounce Christian burial. The following is the formula of such renunciation:

'Knowing the laws of the Catholic Church with regard to Freemasonry, I declare by these presents my firm will:

'(*a*) That at the approach of death I renounce the assistance of a Roman Catholic priest, as I do not wish to renounce my masonry, or violate my promises, or betray my brethren.

'(*b*) That after my death my obsequies shall be performed according to masonic usages, which, however, will not prevent my family from requesting the presence of a minister of any sect they may choose for their own spiritual comfort.'

7.—Freemasonry recognizes the moral and civilizing resources of the Catholic Church; nevertheless, it should not close its eyes to the general anti-social tendencies of that Church.

8.—Wherever the Catholic Church puts its ban on religious toleration, or crushes liberty of belief, and wherever it eliminates freedom of research in its effort to make ecclesiastical dogma the basis of all intellectual culture, Freemasonry should be its avowed enemy and combat it with the greatest vigour."

PANAMA.

The following sidelight from the opposite side of the world is taken from the columns of *America* :—

Freemasonry in Panama.—The organ of the Panama Masonic lodges, *El Nivel*, informs us that "the Masonic creed is in perfect antagonism with the Catholic creed," that "Masonry combats dogma," and that it "rejoices that the temporary president, Sir Mendoza, since succeeded by Sr. Arosemena, belongs to our grand institution of Masonry, and following the doctrine that it teaches, he will effect the happiness of the people of Panama."

ITALY.

Freemasonry has always claimed all the chief credit for the making of United Italy, and has always been the prime mover in all lines of Italian policy hostile to the Church. In former years the anti-religious programme of the craft was a concealed one; but the progress of irreligion in more recent times seems to have gradually rendered this reserve unnecessary. Thus "A traveller" writing to the Saturday Review in 1911, expressed himself as follows :—

The Italian Freemasons have followed the example of their French colleagues and have thrown of all re-

serve. They no longer make the slightest effort to conceal the object of their association, *i. e.*, the de-Christianisation of the Latin countries and the ruin of the religious idea throughout Europe. Signor Ferrari, Grand Master of the Craft in Italy, delivered himself of a speech at Bologna on Monday, February 6, on the occasion of the burial of Signor Golinelli, a popular anti-Clerical Freemason, who was at one time Mayor of Bologna. Signor Ferrari, after sneering at Christian funeral rites (the interment in question was purely secular), pronounced the following very significant words, which have created a profound sensation all over Italy: "Let us salute, without useless tears, the corpse of our friend which will soon be mingled with matter and return to the infinite, but not in spirit form, according to the dirty dogma of the Christians, which we (Freemasons) repudiate."

AGAINST THE VATICAN.

Among the various plans of campaign by which the war against the Catholic Church is carried out, the following is perhaps one of the most interesting:—

The *Unione* of Milan, dated January 22nd, 1911, contained the following: "On the initiation of the International Masonic Centre in Paris, a new International League has been formed. It is composed of prominent politicians, amongst whom are several Italians, and its object is to promote an agitation for the suppression of the diplomatic representation at the Vatican. The Masons have been engaged at this work for some time, but they hope to attain their end in the present year, 1911.

"The letter addressed from Paris to the members of the League explains how Italy, in order to avoid diplomatic complications which would be dangerous in

view of her still unsettled scheme of unity, is compelled to allow this representation as a mark of honour to the Pope. It is impossible to induce the Italian Government to act with energy because these diplomatic representatives have, as yet, all the political character and are consequently a continual menace to the integrity of the State.

"If the Italian Government still tolerates these enemies in her midst, the foreign Governments must be approached in order that they may decide to sweep away this rubbish of an antiquated past. This must be brought forward in Parliament; this must be put as an essential point in political programmes; this must be proclaimed as the object of the members of the League whenever they attain to power. France has been the first to give this glorious example. Portugal is moving in the same direction. In Spain the Leaguers are deploying all their forces to gain this final victory. The efforts of the League should now be turned to Germany, making use of the powerful double leverage afforded by Modernism and Protestantism.

"Such is the tenor of the document which the writer has before him, and in summarising which great discretion has to be used. It is a manuscript letter and has assumed a different shape in detail as sent to each individual, so as to secure the discovery of anyone who would disclose its contents to outsiders. The League counts at the present moment nearly one hundred members, all politicians of the first rank, twenty of whom are representatives of Italy."

This document is of the highest importance. It must be read carefully and its import fully grasped. In the first place, the unity of Italy planned by the Masons is not as complete and as solid as they would wish. The

Papal States were the great stumbling block, and by the spoliation of the Pope they went a long way towards removing this blot on unity. But as long as the Pope remains in Rome there is still an "imperium in imperio." The victory of Masonry is not complete. He must therefore be removed. The reader will note the words employed. "An act of energy" is required from the Italian Government, which simply means the seizure of the Vatican and consequent expulsion of the Pope. The first move must be to strip the Papal Court of the diplomatic representation. As the letter says, these ambassadors and representatives have their full political significance. Many of them represent Catholic Powers; all of them are within the influence of Catholic feeling, and it would be impossible to take that energetic step as long as they were present at the Vatican Court. The word has gone out, therefore, that "this rubbish of an antiquated past must be swept away."

The outlines of the agitation are marked out. Questions are to be asked in the various legislatures; the Masons are to work up this object as one of the points in their programme; and any of them that get into power are to work with all their might for this object.

Once the Pope is left unprotected to his foes, the next step will be easy. As Napoleon III said to the Masonic leaders when the robbery of the Papal States was projected, so the Grand Orient will say to its agents at Rome: "Frappez fort et frappez vite." —*C. T.*, Feb. 3, 1914.

X.

FREEMASONRY IN FRANCE.

ALTHOUGH the strong anti-Catholic and anti-religious character of Continental Freemasonry is by this time pretty widely recognised, it will be more satisfying for our readers to see some detailed facts for themselves. It is a subject on which volumes have been written; so here in this short booklet we shall confine ourselves merely to a bundle of cuttings which we happen to have collected from the current press of the last few years, covering the range of several chief European countries. We begin with France.

AN ENGLISH VIEW.

A somewhat striking article appeared in the London *Standard* of February 27, 1913, on the 'Subversive aims of French Freemasonry.' The article is striking, not because its statements are new, but because they are true, and because it is new to get such facts from such a quarter. The article may almost be regarded as an historical event. It is—as far as we remember—the first occasion on which an English daily paper has printed so frank an *expose* of the evils of Freemasonry and so vindicated the attitude of the Holy See in condemning secret societies. The Paris correspondent—who sends the article in question—says: "The aim of the Grand Orient is to destroy all religion, beginning by stamping out Roman Catholicism in France; to pull down obnoxious thrones and establish a universal republic, but one, be it understood, where its own high priests should reign as dictators." And again:—"The 'Freres Trois Points'—as they are commonly called—are credited with all the revolutions of modern

times in France, Italy, Portugal, Turkey, Persia, and China. . . . The objects of the Grand Orient, symbolised by the three dots, were the liberation of humanity from religious, political, and social points of view."

Catholic France, however, has wakened up to realise the situation, and has taken the very best means for meeting the crisis in an effectual manner. The following account has been summarised from a couple of articles on the subject contributed to THE EXAMINER by Father T. Gavan Duffy in 1912 :—

I. THE ANTI-MASONIC ASSOCIATION.

Among the earliest and bravest of the many efforts by which the Catholics of France have re-acted against the irreligious influences that have brought their country to decay is that of the "*Association antimaconnique de France.*"

The association owes its first conception to the words by which Leo XIII, in his Encyclical *Humanum genus*, bids Catholics "tear off the mask behind which Freemasonry lies hidden and show it as it is." This invitation entered into the soul of one Abbé Tourmentin, and issued in an "Anti-masonic Committee" started in 1893. In 1902 the Committee was strong enough to secure legal recognition as "The Anti-masonic Association of France." Since that time the work has regularly brought its reports to the ears of the Catholic public, first in the national Catholic Congresses and later in its own.

From the reports read at the Congresses of 1909 and 1911 we may gather the scope of the Association :—

"Our end...is to study and make known by tongue and pen the philosophical, social and political influence of Freemasonry and kindred secret societies."

"To this end we have one only method, sure and scientific viz., the accumulation of documentary evidence. In order to expose the true nature of Freemasonry under whatever semblance it may be veiled; in order, further, to check its influence and counteract its plans, we have determined to bring to light the publications that it hides with the greatest care, the authentic reports of its most secret deliberations, and the names, however painstakingly concealed, of its adherents."

This programme has been actually achieved, by the following means:

First and foremost is the fortnightly review published by the Association and giving full accounts of all Masonic doings and schemings, with documentary evidence at the back of every statement. This review was started even before the present Association had come into existence; and it boasts that, at least under present management, it has neither been brought to book over any document nor failed to keep the world informed, month by month, of the most secret proceedings of the Lodges.

Tracts, pamphlets and books have been printed, culminating in the publication, in 1909, of a list, to be eventually brought to completion, of all the Freemasons of the country. The usefulness of this latter achievement will not escape those who realise how carefully many candidates to the public offices hide their Masonic initiation, and how fatal this is to the true fulfilment of the promises which they make at the time of the elections.

Lectures to working-men and others, public readings of papers on Masonic subjects, and reports at the Catholic Congresses, have formed part of the pro-

gramme. The paper read at the International Congress of Catholic Works in 1900, detailed all the plans of the secret societies against the Religious Orders, against the union of Church and State and against education. Many dioceses of France have a priest specially appointed to correspond with the Anti-masonic Association, and to receive from it all information affecting their interests.

Similarly the Association provides irrefutable documents to Catholic Members of the House and enables them to frustrate the most elaborate hypocrisy of their opponents; even the ambassadors of foreign powers have been known to receive due warning, the neglect of which, in the case of Portugal, resulted in the undoing of the Crown.

To add an object-lesson to all this theoretical instruction, the Association has turned its office, at Rue de Grenelle No. 42, into a museum, where the public may examine authentic specimens of all the Masonic vestments and furniture, of their pass-word leaflets and their threatening letters.

All this external activity has the support of a spiritual guild, known as the Crusade of Reparation, which is praying and working for the conversion of the Freemasons and the ruin of their "religion."

After having thus passed in review the Catholic forces which France has raised for the Anti-masonic campaign; let us consider what impression the documents published by the "Anti-masons" leave us of the adverse camp.

II. THE MASONIC SPIRIT.

Masonic and Anti-masonic literature reveals the fact that Freemasonry has a double element, a sort of body and soul, which essentially complete one another.

It is precisely this fact which makes the secret society so elusive and at the same time so fascinating. The first or spiritual element is that by which Freemasonry thinks to supply the place of a religion. The second or material element is that by which it launches out into active life and comes into opposition with the Church.

The spiritual element is made up of Masonic symbolism and ritual, secrecy, solidarity, and the inculcation of "an Ideal."

To be initiated to the "Apprenticeship" or promoted to "Mastership" through a series of most seriously performed, if utterly burlesque blindfold journeys round or over wisely placed obstacles; to wear henceforth such emblems as the square (for justice) or the level (for equality), or the various aprons (for the contempt of arbitrary prejudice); to assist periodically at meetings of the Brothers in symbolically draped Temples; before the Altar where sits the Venerable amidst a wealth of emblems, the mallet, the three-branched candlestick, the eye and the flaming sword; to see the chalice and the vestments and all the mimicry of cultus; habitually to call a plate "a tile," a letter "a board," a lamp "a star," and so with all the rest; to bear, perhaps, the title of Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret, or the Great Inspector Inquisitor Commander; all this may be unthinkably childish in itself, and yet it may create around a soul that has never known the bracing contact of religion an atmosphere sufficiently penetrating to hold it captive until death.

Before entering the secret society the candidate cannot have failed to be aware of its great influence on the public imagination; in all probability he has shared the awe that the name of Freemasonry inspires. But when, at the initiation, he has taken such an oath as

the following: "I swear upon this blade, which is the symbol of honour, and upon the book of the law, to keep inviolate all the secrets which this Lodge shall confide to me as well as whatever I may see or hear therein"; and when he has added perhaps: "Rather would I have my throat cut and be buried in the sand where the ebb and tide may carry me away to eternal oblivion than betray this oath," it cannot be easy, even after the first shock at the slightness of the secrets in question, to escape a penetrating awe such as comes to all who feel the weight of some huge responsibility.

Just as one of the chief joys of a Catholic in his religion comes from the sight of the unity of the Church in every land, so to the Freemason the signs of recognition and the trust, not always justified however, in mutual aid, are strong attractions towards the society that stands to him in the place of a religion. Then the accounts read of the doings of the Brothers in all parts of the world, the mutal encouragement exchanged by the Lodges, the obvious unity of intention and the like, must have on the Freemason's soul something like the same bracing effect as missionary literature has on Catholics.

But now we come to the very essence of the "spirit of Freemasonry," to the intangible Ideal which raises this human structure almost to the dignity of a religion, though a false and suicidal one.

The candidate for admission among the Freemasons of France has to fill in a sheet of questions beside which the confessional and the Inquisition are mere child's-play. The simple reading of this list is enough to sicken one. It synthesises the loosening of every moral bond and the triumph of that freedom which regards law as its arch-enemy.

In the number for April 25th, 1911, of the review published by the Anti-masonic Associations, we find enough quotations from the "theologians" of Masonry to give us an idea of their doctrine :—

"Freemasonry has become the incarnation of free and self-governing Man ;" the truely Masonic soul feels "the Redeemer grow up within him "; " he is called to make real in himself the ideal of a Man-God." All this high language veils but thinly what an orator, bolder than his fellows, spoke at the annual general meeting of 1898 : "It is precisely because we are the elaborators of thought and the champions of universal brotherhood that we regard as our enemies all the ambitious and the selfish who wish to lord it over their equals and set up privilege and caste. For us Freemasons these men are irreconcilable foes whatever garb they wear, be they bearers of the toga or the cassock or the sword."

This Ideal, therefore, underlies the whole Masonic organisation, and gives it life ; even those among the Masons whose intelligence cannot rise to the study of the closer issues to which this spirit leads "feel confusedly around them the collective soul developing," and "contract with this collective soul (of Masonry) will henceforth guide them in their conduct."

Sufficiently convinced as we are by this time that there is a spirit and an evil spirit at work in the body against which the Anti-masonic Association has been founded, let us pass on further and examine how this spirit acts.

III. MASONIC ACTION.

There are at present in France four Rites or obediences of Freemasons, of which the "Grand Orient" is by far the most important in number and weight. As

all these forces are now at one, differing only in some points of form and ritual observance, an account of the constitution and doings of the "Grand Orient" alone will suffice.

The "Anti-masonic Manual" published last year gives the authority for every statement which follows:—

In the Constitutions of Freemasonry there are many articles for "show." Even the Supreme Being is brought in, but simply as an ornament. There is another article to this effect: "Masonic assemblies shall leave political questions aside." But an official organ of the Grand Orient contains the following: "There was a time when it was, if not the rule, at least the practice to declare that Masonry dealt neither with religion nor with politics. . . It was through fear of police-laws that we were compelled to hide what is the mission, the only mission of us all." Another Masonic paper calls upon members to "be citizens. . . but Freemasons *first*; candidate, municipal consellor, deputy, senator, president of the Republic *after*."

This at least hints that they are ambitious of high places—as indeed they must be if they have any hope of spreading the Masonic spirit. That they try, and succeed, in obtaining them for their friends appears from the following story taken from the "Bulletin" of the Grand Orient: "In 1885, on the day of the elections for the Chamber of Deputies, an uninitiated candidate named Chevillon met a member of the Lodge of *The Future* . . . who hinted that there would be more chance of his securing a seat if he were a Mason. "True," said Chevillon, "pity I didn't think of it sooner. Never too late to mend" . . So at five in the evening the *future deputy* Chevillon had received the three initial degrees."

He probably did not realise the slavery into which he had fallen. "The Convention of 1897 requires that all candidates who rely on the support of Masonry in the coming elections should deliver to the Venerable of their Lodge a signed declaration of their philosophical and political principles; these must be in accordance" with those of the Body as a whole. He must know what he is required to hold on these subjects; and he must live up to it under the threat that his Lodge will "take measures to prevent his candidature or at least his election."

But if he is a satisfactory subject, how will they help him? One method consists in "leavening" meetings of electors. At such a meeting there may be some twelve thousand electors, of whom many belong to the working-classes already so excited in France by social problems; the Freemasons will scatter some fifty or sixty of their number in the crowd; at the psychological moments these well-dressed and educated men will show every sign of approval, and by word and example carry on their neighbours to an ill-reasoned applause. The candidate may speak as softly as he wills on delicate questions; he may be a sneaking hypocrite who cares no whit for the interests which his speeches extol: provided the Masons are sure of his inner feelings they will support his every sentiment as he utters it, and so carry the crowd to favour him.

But once he is elected they have not done with him. "The active Masons who shall have been elected Senators or Deputies shall come together at the Grand Orient at least once in three months, so as to agree on the general interests of Masonry and those of the Republic." In an account of one of these meetings we read the following: "This meeting gave splendid

results. A considerable number of our Brothers from the Houses were present. Among the absent there were few who did not send a "board" asserting their attachment to the order . . . . The names of the few Brothers from the Houses who, though invited, did not appear nor send an excuse, are to be sent to their respective Lodges."

In the very Houses they are spied upon. The Masons wish "that a Commission be appointed . . . to follow diligently . . . the attitude and the votes of the Freemasons in Parliament; and "this commission should bring a report every three months, pointing out those members on whom it would be well to call the attention of the workshops."

And the end of it all is that "if Freemasonry will only get organised, not for theory but for the practical issues of which we speak, within ten years it will have carried all before it and no one will move in France outside our pale."

NOTE ON ENGLISH MASONRY.

(1) It may be worth while to add, for the English-speaking reader, the opinion of the Association on English Masonry :—

"English Freemasonry believes in solidarity only in so far as its personal ambitions may be advanced thereby. Its ambitions and those of the British empire are in close alliance. It has no need of the "International Bureau for Masonic Unity".... and cares little for "ententes cordiales" except such as reserve for it the (British) lion's share."

(2) Hence, when an address of sympathy from the "Orient of Paris " No. 137 under the obedience of the Grand Orient of France, was sent to the " Most Re-

spectable Grand Lodge of England," on the occasion of the death of King Edward VII. "Grand Protector of the Masonic Order in England," we cannot help comparing the enthusiastic overtures of the French document with the cold reserve of the English reply. The French document contained the following paragraph :—

"As our traditions demand that each *batterie de deuil* (resolution passed in a Lodge, here of mourning) be covered by a batterie of rejoicing, we have 'fired off' the present in honour of your Most Respectable Grand Lodge, of the Most Respectable Grand Master and Pro-Grand Master. *Although our mode of understanding and practising Freemasonry does not coincide in all points with the English conception and practice,* we are nevertheless on either side labourers in the same work of general progress, and we *fraternise* to-day by shedding sincere tears over the tomb of the enlightened Mason who has shown us the way to *concord, reciprocal esteem and mutual love.*"

The reply of the Grand Lodge of England carefully abstains from all allusion to these fervent expressions of solidarity, and merely says :—

"Dear Sir and *Brother*, I have been commanded by the Most Venerable Grand Master to request you kindly to convey to the Venerable Master and Brothers of your Lodge the grateful thanks of His Royal Highness and the Grand Lodge of England for the expression of our loyal and Brotherly sympathy, on the occasion of the irreparable loss sustained by Freemasonry through the lamented death of His late Majesty King Edward VII., Protector of the Order."

"I am, dear Sir and *Brother*, Fraternally Yours, E. Letchworth, Grand Secretary."

POLITICAL INTRIGUE.

An article in the *Nineteenth Century* for April 1910 opened with the following quotation :—

"Freemasonry is nothing more nor less than a political association. It not only occupies itself entirely with politics in its Annual Conventions, but it also organises political demonstrations, supports candidatures, assists the Government, intervenes in matters of administration, makes itself a substitute for the President of the Republic, recommends for all the civil and military posts by a provision of its Constitution, communicates officially with the President of the Council and the Ministers, sends addresses and receives replies. Such is the true part played by Freemasonry of the present day." The writer of the article then continues :—

"It is thus that *Le Temps*, on the 6th of January 1905, described and criticised the *rôle* of Freemasonry in France. *Le Temps*. . . . . has no attachment to religious ideals ; it is absolutely Republican, and no less resolutely rationalist and free-thinking. This judgment upon Freemasonry arose from a discussion between the *Temps* and the *Depeche* of Toulouse ; a paper also free-thinking and radical, and equally unlikely to accuse Freemasonry without sufficient motive or through excess of religious zeal. Like the *Temps*, the *Depeche* complained of the unlimited influence of the Masons. The dispute between the two free-thinking papers was over the question whether Freemasonry ought not to declare itself openly to be what it is in reality—a political association.

"Freemasonry prefers to be regarded as a society of simple philanthropists devoted to philosophical studies,

and it cherishes that article of its rules which gives it this character. The *Depeche* maintained that the hour had come to abandon such an absurd and misleading conception. It said that Masonry has an ancient habit of employing contradictory tactics, and that the same association, which in other countries, and even in France, affects to leave politics aside, is also capable of devoting itself entirely to politics."

"The *Temps* describes its double *rôle* thus :

"Freemasonry desires to remain an association of a secret and discreet nature. By the character of its rites and formularies it evades all control of the uninitiated, and all legal restrictions. Its aim is to be exclusively a political association, but without declaring itself to be such. Its secret methods enable it to enrol military officers in its ranks, and disarm the scruples of the Minister for War. It knows the danger of publicity and the advantages of obscurity. It works in the same way with regard to religious liberty and belief.

"The fact is indisputable, and yet when it is affirmed before an Englishman, a German, or an American, it is only with the greatest difficulty that he can be brought to admit it. As a matter of fact the Englishman, the German, or the American, has never, in his own country, found Freemasonry put forward such claims. They often are hardly aware of the presence of Freemasonry amongst them, or they have seen it represented by moderate, liberal-minded men, by philanthropists or men of philosophical mind. They cannot believe that the respectable association which in their country has such a reasonable and modest aspect can elsewhere appear as the instrument of the spirit of passionate, sectarian, and authoritative irreligion. They ask for

proof, convinced that valid and positive proofs can never be produced.

"Nevertheless, in France during the last ten years, these proofs have multiplied with extraordinary abundance. Freemasonry itself, sure of its strength, has produced them unhesitatingly, and continues to do so daily. Indeed, it is more or less obliged to do so in order to play the part it has assumed. The proofs are so numerous that a number of this Review would soon be filled by simply quoting them, without a word of comment, from the official declarations made in the Lodges. These declarations state that the aim of French Freemasonry is the destruction of all religion, the direction of politics, of the law, education, and legislation, and the influencing of political life in France. And it claims to have already realised a large part of this programme."

"The documents necessary to consider the matter are at every one's disposal. First, there are the Masonic papers and reviews which publish accounts of the sittings held in the Lodges, and give reports of the discussions and the text of the speeches. There are also the reports of the deliberations of the Annual Conventions." [End of quotation.]

The author then goes on to produce specimens of the evidence, taken from the Convention of 1902, and bearing on such questions on the suppression of 15,000 schools of the religious Congregations; the laicisation of the school, total state monopoly, and the removal of the religious element from the teaching.

Specially striking is the author's account of the *fiches maconniques* as furnishing an extraordinary example of the domineering spirit of the Lodges:—"This incident," he writes "was much talked of in the Chambers,

the Press, and the Army, and, indeed, all over France. A considerable number of deputies and senators had joined the ranks of the Freemasons. They wished to see the Army at their disposal, and, with this object, they began a great secret inquiry into the circumstances of the officers of the Army. The aim of the inquiry was to suppress one by one those officers who, by their character and independence, opposed, or might ever be likely to oppose, the introduction of the Masonic doctrines into the Army. The first step was to take possession of those in command, and to this end all means seemed justified. In the course of four years, 1900-1904, the Freemasons presented to the Grand Orient upwards of 25,000 notes (*fiches*), the results of their inquiries on the officers.

"Since 1902 and the Ministry of Combes, the Minister of War, General André, had supported the Freemasons in this work of denunciation, and for General André the conclusions of the shady spies of the Freemasons were decisive. Thirty years of military service without a stain, thirty years of bravery, of self-abnegation and discipline, vanished in the face of the two words which the Freemasons have ever abused—'Clerical, reactionary.'

"This is the enormity which M. Guyot de Villeneuve denounced to the whole of France in the historic Congress of the 28th of October 1904. He read a series of documents, which are registered in the *Journal Official*, and of which we will endeavour to show the character :—

"Brother Vadecard, Secrétaire General of the Grand Orient had been commissioned to request the Lodges to supply information concerning the officers of the various garrisons.

"Here is the text of the Masonic circular :—

Grand Orient of France, Supreme Council for France and the French Possessions. Paris: 20th July, 1901.

MOST DEAR BROTHER,—I should be much obliged if you could kindly put us in possession of the information with which the enclosed note is concerned. You would do us a great service in doing so. We should be very glad to receive the information before the 15th of October next.

"And the note added to each of the letters was this: We ask for very complete detailed information from the political and philosophical point of view on all the superior officers—generals, commanders, lieutenant-colonels, colonels of . . . .

"The information poured in from all the Lodges. Before the Chamber M. Guyot de Villeneuve read a number of documents, showing how the system of spies was organised around the officers; the denunciatory evidence was centralised in Paris at the Ministry of War, and entrusted to Captain Mollin, under the control of General Percin, who was then Chief Secretary to the Ministry. Both the Captain and the General were Masons. The letters of Captain Mollin to the representative of the Lodges were written on official paper, and by the side of the printed heading, 'Ministere de la Guerre, Cabinet du Ministre,' was the Masonic seal 'Grand Orient of France.'

"This produced a profound impression in the Chamber. M. Combes, then Prime Minister, was obliged to declare that the scheme was organised without his orders; the majority of the deputies were indignant, and M. Barthou, now a Minister, exclaimed that the facts revealed from the Tribune were abominable.

"M. Maujan, the present Under-Secretary of State for the Interior, proposed the following 'Ordre du Jour':

" 'The Chamber censuring, if rightly understood, the inadmissable proceedings described from the Tribune, and, being convinced that the Minister of War will give in this case the necessary sanction, passes to the order of the day.'

"This resolution was supported by 278 votes as against 274. Amongst the deputies who thus repudiated the Masonic machinations were many Freemasons, and General Andre, the Minister of War, under whose authority the espionage had been organised, thought it advisable to accept the Order of the Day which censured it.

"The Masonic leaders, however, had not a moment's hesitation. Far from it, they gloried in the acts that had been revealed, and, lest the bad impression made upon the public should diminish the zeal of the Masons, the Grand Orient addressed to all the Lodges a circular, a regular manifesto, in which their leaders said:—

" 'We maintain in the name of all Freemasons that, in furnishing the Minister of War with information concerning the faithful servants of the Republic, and those who, by their hostile attitude, cause us most reasonable anxiety, the Grand Orient of France has exercised a lawful right, and has fulfilled an urgent duty.'

"The manifesto was dated the 2nd of November 1904.

" The free-thinking and Masonic deputies of the Republic, who had censured the system of *delation* were officially censured in their turn, and soon found that their own position was menaced.

"The manifesto wound up thus :—

"We desire to point out to our Lodges, and to all

Masons, present and future, that votes have been given in weakness, fear, and cowardice, by a certain number of Republicans, who at a moment when their duty was to offer resistance to unbridled reaction, joined their voices to those of our most bitter enemies. This recalls, alas, the weakness, the fear, and the cowardice of the darkest days of Boulangism and victorius Nationalism.

"The Republic, in spite of all, has once more conquered. Many, we hope, thus have time to pull themselves up. *Our Ateliers will meanwhile keep an eye upon them.*

"This manifesto was signed by M. Lafferre, Deputy and President of the Council of the Order; by M. Sincholle and M. J. B. Morin, Vice-Presidents, and by M. Bouley, Secretary, and was published in most of the daily papers without a single voice disputing its authenticity." [End of quotation.]

A SEVERE CHECK.

In 1911 Catholic opposition to Freemasonry in France received a strong reinforcement which should help to make the dangerous influence of the Lodges appreciated by the people. At a meeting of the Confederation of Labour composed principally of working men, "King" Pataud declared that Freemasonry was more dangerous than was generally known. Having told how the Freemasons of the different Lodges had received orders to place as many Masons as possible in the different Government offices, he pointed out that at present there were 40,000 officious spies at work to the detriment of forty million of people. To catch hold of their syndicates the Masons commenced by starting unions, trying to gain the mind and sympathies of the workmen, with the intention of diverting

them from their just aim. The men were inflamed against religion and Christianity in order to make them forget the sins of the capitalists and of the politicians who had promised them old-age pensions out of the spoils of the religious congregations. He mentioned several facts of masonic intervention in the syndicates, notably the correspondence between the secretary of the syndicate of the stenodactylographs and a venerable of the Masonic Lodge called "Charitable Friends" soliciting adherents. Thus the syndicates of the miners in the North of France were mostly monopolised by Freemasonry. In many other cases Freemasonry was at the bottom of the strikes, and a good many of the good class of working men were thus gained over to them. When a man in the audience sought to silence him with the gibe that he was talking "like a curé," Pataud replied amidst loud applause that he preferred a curé, whose life is known to all, and who wears his cassock publicly, to a Freemason who hides his apron.

As a result of this speech, the meeting passed a resolution which declared that having heard M. Pataud's exposure of the attempts of Freemasonry to attract the formidable syndicalistic movement newly started, "an attempt which, if it succeeded would quash the object of the movement, the struggle of the working man against the capitalist, and understanding and being made aware of the danger that Freemasonry will form workingmen's syndicates whose true description would be associations of malefactors, the meeting has decided to live in future on a food more substantial than Anticlericalism." Finally, militant syndicalists were exhorted to keep aloof of the Masonic Lodges, where they would only compromise themselves, and betray their

comrades to the detriment of a sacred, good cause. The passing of the resolution was hailed with loud cries of "Down with the secret influence of Masonry."—*Tablet*, April 22, 1911.

THE EFFECTS OF THE CHECK.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc, writing on the Catholic revival in France, bears witness that this reaction against Freemasonry was no passing incident. In the Catholic *World* of April 1914 he writes :—

"The break-up of Freemasonry came with surprising quickness, and was brought on as much as anything by the Dreyfus case. Its whole power consisted in France, of course, as it consists everywhere, in secrecy. To get people to believe that it is a mere friendly society—on its own unsupported word and in spite of the grossly immoral principle inherent in all secret societies—was, and is still in Protestant countries, its principal strength. The Dreyfus case blew all that sky-high. French Freemasonry then appeared in the eyes of all Frenchmen, however provincial or stupid, in the light of an anti-Catholic society, and no one could be so dull as not to note the way in which in proportion as Freemasonry was strong in any country, in that proportion was the violent campaign against the French army and the French Church supported. As always happens after a breakdown, events accelerated the failure of Freemasonry when it had once made this principal error. Its last attempt—a failure—to play its old role was in connection with the Ferrer case ; and now it may be said, with some truth, that the very name of this secret society has become ridiculous in the ears of most Frenchmen. Its ritual is exposed, its recruitment has fallen to a lower and a lower class of citizens ; its methods of conspiracy and

private spying are public property, and therefore have brought it into final and well deserved odium. A Catholic member of the French Parliament discovered one of those innumerable cases of general and secret spying, for which Freemasonry is organized, in the case of the army. He exposed the fact that the Masons had docketed and referred to a Masonic Minister at the War Office every officer who practised the Catholic religion. No better example of the power of Freemasonry in England, or of its breakdown in France, is to be found than the fact that such an iniquity was the one public matter in France and throughout most of the Continent for weeks, while the whole story was rigidly boycotted in the English press.

XI.

SOME OTHER COUNTRIES.

I. FREEMASONRY IN BELGIUM.

At the Catholic Congress held at Mechlin in 1910 a report was presented by the Count de Renesse Briedbach on the subject of the conflict between the Church and Freemasonry in Belgium. When the lecturer moved that the time had come for the formation of an anti-Masonic league, the proposition was received by the entire assembly with enthusiastic applause. The projected league has since been established, and has its head-quarters at 2, Rue du Cypres, Brussels. That this measure of self-defence was urgently called for, nobody can deny. Events within recent years have made it evident that Freemasonry is engaged in a

world-wide war against the Church. As a flourishing Catholic country, Belgium naturally occupied the attention of the craft. For thirty years and more, it has used every means to undermine the faith of that country, and it was high time that a systematic campaign of self-defence should be organised.

The programme of the newly-founded Anti-Masonic League started by establishing an information bureau. Its primary object was to supply the newspapers with authentic documents revealing the action of the lodges. For to oppose the schemes of the craft it is necessary to obtain possession of and to publish its official papers. An essay in this direction had already been made with brilliant results. During the short space of five months five hundred articles appeared in a few daily papers only, all based on documents emanating from the lodges. It was the success which attended these efforts that warranted the establishment of a permanent information bureau without further delay. Special correspondents are appointed in the principal towns to co-operate with the central committee in its industry of detection and denouncement. Lectures have been arranged, books and pamphlets edited, tracts and picture post-cards printed, a monthly Bulletin issued. Even an anti-Masonic museum is in process of formation. The leaders of the new crusade are three prominent laymen, Count de Renesse Breidbach, M. Valentin Brifàcet and Viscount Jean de Jonghe d'Ardoye.—*C. T.*, Jan. 6, 1911.

MASONRY AND THE BELGIAN ARMY.

The reaction against Freemasonry which we have already recorded in case of France, seems simultaneously to have taken place in Belgium :—

Early in 1913, during a debate on the system of military promotion, the question of the affiliation of army

officers to the Masonic lodges came up incidentally for discussion. So far back as 1846 a circular of the then Minister of War laid down that no officer was allowed to join a secret or political association ; and on various occasions since then the prohibition has been renewed by the highest military authority. But though the regulation was clear and precise, and Freemasonry was aimed at as coming under the prohibition, this direction was never enforced. A considerable number of officers became affiliated to the sect, while within the past few years an active propaganda has been carried on in the army to swell the roll of adherents. Aware of these facts, and recognising the danger likely to result, not only to military discipline, but also to the best interests of the country, the Minister of war recently issued a circular calling the attention of the army to the long standing prohibition, and notifying that the directions should be strictly followed. M. de Broqueville's circular was denounced by the socialist and Radical organs. A deputy who is a high dignitary of the Masonic fraternity demanded a categorical reply from M. de Broqueville, whether Freemasonry was one of the societies to which entrance was denied by his recent circular.

Masonic official documents in hand, M. de Broqueville made a lengthy statement in which he proved beyond yea or nay that Freemasonry is unquestionably a secret organisation, occupying itself with questions decidedly political, and with aims that no officer who is faithful to his oath of allegiance and to the duties he owes to his country can conscientiously approve. The circular lately issued did but insist on the prohibition of 1846 ; and this latter document, remarked the Minister, was evidently modelled on a similar regulation which

existed in France—a regulation which, by the way, has never been allowed to remain a dead letter. No later than September 1912, M. Millerand notified by circular that army officers were not permitted to join any association, political or other, without the previous consent of the Government.

That Freemasonry occupied itself actively with political questions, M. de Broqueville had no difficulty in showing by numerous citations from official documents emanating from the lodge. The Grand Orient, he said, discussed at length on one occasion "the fatal influence exercised by the Catholic chaplains amongst the military, and pronounced most emphatically against such an institution." Enlarging the matter of debate, it devoted an entire sitting to "the best means of conducting the anti-clerical Masonic propaganda." The passages are to be found in a report to the Grand Orient dated the 12th of the 12th month, 1910. The following is from the "Bulletin du Grand Orient de Belgique": "The Liberal Party is the profane expression of Freemasonry. . . . . The Liberal family is without compass and without guide. There is nobody, no institution which directs it: a direction must be given it. The experience of 1876 proved that if an understanding be possible between the leaders of Liberalism, it is in the bosom of Freemasonry such an understanding is to be arrived at. . . . . In Freemasonry the Liberal Party will find its guide and firm support. . . . The union of all Masons can alone assure the union of the various fractions which at present compose the great political party of which Freemasonry should be the advanced guard and the best guide. . . The alliance [of Liberals of different shades] was enthusiastically acclaimed, and war to the

death was officially declared against the Government—war without truce or mercy until the day when the Clerical Party shall be completely routed. . . We should not lose sight of the fact that Clericalism can only progress in the shadow of the Church.

"To destroy the Church is the aim which all should pursue who are interested in the emancipation and social amelioration of humanity." At one of the banquets of the Lodge an eminent Grand Master, after an urgent plea in favour of combined action, concluded by toasting "the approaching day when, by the union of all the Anticlerical forces, we may celebrate the overthrow of the Clerical Government."

Among other documents cited by M. de Broqueville was one bearing on affairs in Portugal. It showed that the Grand Orator at a meeting of the Grand Orient of Belgium expressed himself in the following terms: "Do you remember the profound feeling of pride we all experienced when we heard some time ago the news of the Portuguese revolution? In a few hours the throne was laid low, the people triumphant, the republic proclaimed. It was a thunderbolt for the uninitiated public. But we, my brothers, we knew. We were acquainted with the admirable organisation of the Lusitanian brethren, their indomitable proselytism, there persevering and tenacious activity. We were in the secret of that glorious event. The day that our unfortunate country shall be delivered from the tyranny that oppresses it, shall we have the satisfaction of saying that Belgian Masonry was the principal artisan of the national liberation." The Grand Orator who pronounce this harangue was the Socialist deputy, the Citizen Furnemont.—*C. T.*, Feb. 21, 1913.

II. FREEMASONRY IN ITALY.

The reaction against Freemasonry, which we have already seen in France and Belgium, showed itself equally in Italy:—

Early in 1913, certain incidents of the Tripoli war happened to come to light, which showed that Freemasonry had been successfully made use of in the Italian army and navy to secure the rapid promotion of masonic members and to prevent that of non-mason officers.

Consequently in the month of May, 1913, the Italian Minister of War, General Spingardi, acting as well for the Naval Minister, and representing the Government, declared war against Freemasonry. Answering questions in the Senate, he said it was desirable and necessary that no one in the army or navy should be a member of a secret society. In both services the atmosphere ought to be one of brightness, freedom, and loyalty, so that the work might be performed with the requisite liberty and that duty might be discharged without any other motive, open or hidden, than because it was duty. The superior who would subject himself to an inferior simply because the latter held a higher grade in the secret hierarchy to which they both belonged, would betray his duty and prositute the dignity of his position in the army or the navy. His removal from the army or navy would be absolutely essential, as well as the removal of the superior official who, in giving or forwarding orders with regard to an inferior, obeyed a collective body rather than his own free conscience. Measures would be taken to prevent this happening; and whilst he held his post it might be taken for granted that he would never be induced to deviate from what he believed to be his sacred duty as

a citizen and a soldier by the influence of any association whatsoever.

This declaration was received with general approval by the Italian Press. "L'Esercito Italiano," the organ of military men in Italy, wrote :—"We are more than ever convinced that the incompatibility of the officers' presence at Masonic functions with the faithful discharge of his duties cannot be called in doubt, and that between Masonic and military discipline there must be a conflict." Other papers, Catholic and non-Catholic, voiced similar sentiments in even stronger terms.

The Rome correspondent of the *Times* observed "secret associations, notably Freemasonry, have played a very important part in Italy in the past; the Freemasons are still to-day believed to exercise a widespread influence in public life; that they should be publicly banned, without a single voice being raised in their defence, would show that their day of usefulness is recognized as ended, and that the confidence of the great mass of the public in its institutions, in the Throne, in the Army and Navy, in religion, has been strongly renewed. The statements of the two Ministers have only been emphasized by the Italian press, which warns officers against entering the ranks of Freemasons, and calls upon those who are already members of the association to leave it at once."

Most people in Rome fancied that the campaign opened against Freemasonry in Italy would die a natural death within a few weeks. Quite the contrary was the case. The Catholic Press was seconded by the organ of the Italian army and the respectable portion of the secular newspapers; and so vigorous were the denunciations of the secret society that public opinion in every part of the nation was thoroughly roused.

Mindful of the fact that four thousand officers of the Italian army and one thousand of the navy are Freemasons, the "Esercito Italiano" called upon military men to abandon the organisation. Offers of revelations as to Masonic doings reached the "Corriere d'Italia" from many quarters, and this journal chose Signor Pasquale Barreca, an ex-Mason, to relate the experiences he gained during the dozen or fifteen years of his life passed as a member of the masonic body. The "Associazione Nazionalista" denounced Freemasonry as "the most formidable and insidious enemy that Italy has," and answered the self-defence of Freemasons by challenging the secret sect to a public controversy. Indeed, so great was the change wrought in the mind of Italy against Freemasonry that the only voice raised in its favour was its own bombastic manifesto, where "lofty ideals, austere principles, and outspoken frankness" were prated about, to the amusement of the man in the street.

No further discussion on the subject occurred in the cabinet. But, says the Rome correspondent of the *Times*, "even as the matter stands, a salutary effect has been produced. Freemasonry has been officially discountenanced and discouraged in the military services, and the civil services are bound, sooner or later, to follow the lead given them. It has also been discredited in the eyes of the public, a result owing largely to its attempts at self-defence. That defence has been its own condemnation." The defence is the one with which we are so familiar, an appeal to Masonry's glorious past, its admirable secret aims for the advancement of civilisation and humanity, and a declaration that no one could attack it without allying himself with clericalism and the forces of reaction.

In reply to this, the *Times* correspondent says that " its utility, like its history, is a thing of the past. The work that it did then secretly can now be done openly. Secrecy, which is the essence of Freemasonry, only hinders and prejudices the progress that it professes to have at heart. There is absolutely no necessity for such secrecy in Italy to-day, when a man can profess any political convictions, or any religion, or want of religion, that he pleases. And to brand people as clerical because they disapprove of Freemasonry or any other secret society is to irritate a very large number of Liberals, Democrats, and even more advanced politicians, who have always held secret societies in detestation. . . . It is from the least clerical and most Liberal section of public opinion in Italy that the present attack upon Freemasonry has come." Suspicion has been aroused, by the way in which Freemasons carried out the duty of helping each other. As the correspondent puts it: "That is just what Italian Democracy feared and suspected. It has had a vision of promotion in the army, the navy, or public services in general, being subject sometimes to the dictates of a Freemason lodge; of decisions being given by judges and magistrates according to Freemason ruling; of unaccountable obstacles placed by Freemasons in the life of ordinary citizens; and against the reality of that vision it will rebel."—From the *C. Press*, July 24, 1913.

A few months later the *Idea Nazionale* organised a referendum on Freemasonry. It sent out to all the distinguished people in Italy in the political, literary and scientific world, the three following questions:—(1) "Do you think that the existence of a secret association like Freemasonry is compatible with the con-

ditions of public life to-day ? (2) Do you think that materialistic rationalism and humanitarian and internationalistic ideology, the guiding spirit of Freemasonry, are in agreement with the living tendencies of contemporary thought ? (3) Do you think that the hidden action of Freemasonry in Italian life, specially in military institutions, in the magistracy, in the schools, and in public administrations brings good (or harm) to the country ?" The replies of many of the distinguished people, senators, deputies, professors, generals and admirals, were published ; and the unanimous reply was an emphatic "No" to all three questions.

The subject was specially considered from the point of view of the services, in which Freemasonry is considered to be subversive of discipline, and of the administaration of justice, which runs the risk of being corrupted if members of a secret society are in high places on the judicial bench. The *Idea Nazionale* by its inquiry verified what was generally believed to be the verdict of the people, even including Socialists, regarding Freemasonry. (*C. T.*, May 23, June 6 ; *Tab.*, May 31, Aug. 26, 1913).

III. FREEMASONRY IN ARGENTINA.

THE reaction against Freemasonry, already so strong in several European countires, has even spread to the new world. Thus a Brooklyn correspondent of *The Evening Sun*, writing in March 1914, observed :—

"In the short time of sixteen years the Masons have established in the Republic of Argentina 108 lodges, with 4,500 members. Happy with their lot, they believed they were strong enough to come out of their houses and demand official recognition from the gov-

ernment for the society. To this the Government replied very politely that it was not the rule to concede such a favour without a thorough investigation of the solicitor's request, and it was necessary to examine the constitution and by-laws of the Masonic order before proceeding with the official recognition.

"After a thorough investigation of the said constitution and by-laws the government refused officially to recognize the Masons, and for the following reasons :

"That the said society does not contribute in any way to the welfare of the republic but caters exclusively to the interest of its members ; is prejudicial to the citizens in general, and compels its members to combat the teaching of liberty with the idea of taking away the school from the church and religious communities ; therefore it is against the constitution of the republic."

But there are still certain countries in which so far Freemasonry is having its own way—for the simple reason that it has not yet been found out. We give three samples :—

IV. FREEMASONRY IN PORTUGAL.

The fact that the Revolution in Portugal was chiefly the work of the Freemasons is so notorious as hardly to call for proof. The following cuttings, therefore, will be sufficient :—

(1) The *Catholic Times*, writing at the time, informed us that "the reports from Portugal leave no doubt as to the part which the Masonic lodges have played in the revolution. The new Ministers all belong to the craft. They received their orders from superiors abroad whose object was not to promote the welfare of Portugal but to strike a blow

at Christianity. Portugal has long been in the grip of this secret society. A very large number of the members of the upper and middle classes belong to it, and the influence they exercise amongst the uneducated masses enabled them to pave the way for the adoption of the Masonic programme. The Government are following out the main lines of this programme, to the character of which Pope Leo XIII. called attention in his Encyclical of the 15th October, 1890. Religious instruction of every kind is to be abolished in the schools. The young are to be withdrawn from clerical control or supervision. The Government, which has abjured religion, is to form the minds of the citizens. All religious corporations are to be suppressed and their property is to be confiscated. Monks and nuns are not to be allowed to reside in the country. The institutions which they have conducted are to be completely laicised. The word of command has gone forth that in every respect the Portuguese Ministers must regard the policy of the French Government as their model."

(2) Early in 1911 *Rome* wrote :—

A few days ago Senhor Magalhaes Lima, Grand Master of Portuguese Freemasonry and of that Provisional Government which is an insult to the whole civilised world, was the object of a manifestation organised by the Lodges. Bernardino Machado, one of the Ministers, was present at it as official representative of the Government; and in the course of his speech he did not hesitate to say, as reported by the Republican paper *O Mundo* : "The fraternal union of the Government and Freemasonry will always continue, as before the Revolution, because it is in the "temple," that the Government will always find the most virile

spirits and the most disinterested fighters. From Freemasonry has come the triumphant revolution, and in it are to be found the elements capable of defending the work to which they have so powerfully contributed. It is impossible to forget the important part played by Freemasonry in the revolution. We give a proof of our esteem for the Masonic Order by embracing, in the name of the Government, the Grand Master Senhor Magalhaes Lima."

(3) On May 1st, 1912, *The Times of India* wrote as follows :—

We commend to the notice of the many in Bombay who claim to be of Portuguese descent an article in the April number of "The Oxford and Cambridge Review" called "Freemasonry v. Christianity." The author is general secretary of the French Anti-Masonic League and his views may on that account be thought to be grossly partial ; but the Editor of the Review explains that the article is the first of a series designed without prejudice to show the true facts of what is now called "Masonry" on the Continent. "Englishmen," he says, "for the most part are unaware of the "extent to which the Masonic lodges affiliated to the "Grand Orient of Paris, which was excommunicated by "English Masonry in the forties for eliminating from "its formularies all mention of the Supreme Being, "have become in practice atheistic organisations." The author of the article, M. Flavien Brenier, first shows how the Portuguese Freemasons reorganised the Carbonari, the secret society which had played a very active part in the Portuguese civil wars of 1820-1835, in order to prepare the downfall of the monarchy. He goes on to show what sort of treatment the Carbonari are now meting out to political prisoners in Portugal.

"Save in certain Oriental prisons it would be difficult "to parallel the inhuman treatment meted out by the "gaolers of the Portuguese Republic to the innocent "prisoners with whom the prisons are choked." It is an appalling indictment, capable it would seem of being supported by documentary evidence. Of course the facts will be officially denied, but they convey an air of truth to those who have watched the failure of republicanism in Portugal that will not be dispelled by any hasty *dementi*.

[See also the last paragraph under *Freemasonry in Belgium*.]

V. FREEMASONRY IN HUNGARY.

In 1913 the Berlin correspondent of the *Irish World* called attention to a series of articles of the Hungarian Deputy, Karl Husar, appearing in a well-known and influential German paper, that were attracting universal attention. They give some idea of the campaign pursued by the Freemasons in the country of the Maygars. The Lodges are working there with all their strength for the overthrow of the Monarchy and the establishment of a Republic. And this only as a means to the realisation of their publicly pronounced end, *viz.*, the overthrow of the Catholic Church, and the wiping out of the Christian religion and all belief in the supernatural. They had already established a daily paper, the "Bilag" or "World," and actually secured in the foundation of this paper a Government subsidy. Through this paper the Masonic Deputies, and Monist and Agnostic writers carried on an active propaganda. In close touch with it was a political society clamouring for what it calls reform and putting forward as the first plank of its programme

a demand for the secularisation of all church property. Just as in France, where the bait of the alleged milliard was dangled before the eyes of the people, they were in Hungary talking of the great benefits that are to come to the workers and the landless when religious have been expelled from their churches and schools, asylums and hospitals, and the money acruing from the sale of such properties is used for the benefit of the people.

The writer of the articles referred to pointed out that the Masonic party was beginning, as in France, with the schools. They had already succeeded in driving Baron Bartoczy from that section of the Public Worship Office which deals with the middle schools. The Baron is the Protector of the Marist Congregation in Hungary, and has proved himself on more than one occasion the protector of these zealous men in very deed. He became, therefore, a marked man, and the secret plotters, ever on the watch, seized on the first opportunity that offered and forced him out of the office where he saw that the Marists received the fair treatment guaranteed them by Hungarian law. They next called out in Parliament for the expulsion of the Marists from the Hungarian kingdom, but the Catholic Deputies were aroused and succeeded in defeating them for the time, at least. The Deputy Huszar, however, thinks that Hungary is on the verge of a new Kulturkampf. It will begin with the schools, and the fight will be a big one since there are in Hungary only 3,000 interconfessional State schools as against 12,075 Confessional schools. Of these latter 7,000 are Catholics, 3,000 belong to the Protestants, 430 to the Jews, and 1,457 are Orthodox Greek. The Masons plead to have all these schools "mixed," of

which there are only 1,000 at present. Such a decision would naturally eventually destroy the religious character of all the schools; and this is just what is wanted. Already the Catholics are arranging to fight this design, and organisations of parents are being formed in the various districts affected.

VI. FREEMASONRY IN TURKEY.

In 1912 the "Oxford and Cambridge Review" gave some astonishing information about "Freemasonry in Turkey" from the pen of Flavian Brenier, General Secretary of the French Anti-Masonic League. The Masonic Society professes to be open to all believers in the existence of God, and it seems to have made considerable progress among the Turks. It was introduced originally into that country by English merchants. In 1859 Freemasons were concerned in a conspiracy against the life of the Sultan. The next Sultan, Abdul Aziz, however, was friendly to them. "He showed," says our author, "a genuine desire to regenerate his empire by the adoption of European institutions, and to this end surrounded himself with Ministers and high officials belonging to the Masonic Order, little suspecting that these same men would undermine the very foundations of his civil and religious authority. Typical of this class of Masonic statesmen was Midhat Pasha, whom he appointed in the first place Governor of Bulgaria, then Minister, and finally Grand Vizier. This man was destined to end by imbruing his hands in his master's blood. The practical result of Abdul Aziz's reign was to place Turkey in the hands of the Turkish lodges, that is to say in the power of less than three hundred persons, for the total number of Masons in the Ottoman dominions did not exceed that figure."

This Masonic tyranny aimed at restricting liberty of religious belief and practice, the Mohammedan religion included. "The dreams harboured by one section of the Turkish Masonic community far outstripped the anti-religious policy which they found possible to force upon Abdul Aziz. They aimed at no less a thing than the establishment of an atheistic Republic, by means of which a mere handful of obscure tyrants would have been enabled to impose their oppressive yoke upon all the races and religions comprised within the empire. The Masonic committee, reflecting these views, was engaged in close correspondence with the most advanced faction of European Carbonarism, *viz.*, the 'Young Europe,' founded by Mazzini, and after assuming the title of 'Young Turkey,' itself formed a unit in the general system devised by Mazzini." The most active worker on this committee was a Roumanian, Canesco. He won over a disaffected Prince Mustapha, and induced him to place the whole of his immense wealth at the disposal of "Young Turkey."

This society then (1867) began to dominate the affairs of the nation, and all the officials appointed in its constitution were freemasons. As their plan was to overthrow the reigning Sultan, to make way for his Masonic nephew, the former proceeded to take vigorous measures against the conspirators. Nevertheless "although he thus took up the gauntlet thrown down by the most advanced section of Turkish Freemasonry, the Sultan continued to surround himself with Masons like Ali Pasha, Fuad Pasha, and Midhat Pasha, whose apparent loyalism did not go far to compensate for their perverted policy. Amongst the chief benefits he derived from them were the creation of a large number of lay schools, the object of which was to spread athe-

ism in the most religious empire in the world, and a series of persecutory attacks upon the Christian communities, the result of which was to compel them to furnish themselves with weapons of defence. Thanks also to their costly and useless aping of Western institutions, the Sultan found the financial condition of his dominions brought well nigh to utter ruin." This ruin was consummated under the presidency of the Mason Prince Mustaphas, aforementioned. In 1876 the Sultan was forced by the Young Turks to abdicate, and shortly afterwards he was found dead in his room. The crime, as was proved later, had been committed by order of the three principal Masonic Ministers. The new Sultan Murad was an obedient instrument in the hands of the Turkish Freemasons, but, unfortunately for them, he soon went mad. He was, therefore, deposed, and Abdool Hamid II. his brother, who professed the liveliest sympathy with his uncle's murderers and their policy, reigned in his stead.

VII. FREEMASONRY IN MEXICO.

From *America*, Oct. 24, 1914.

The part played by Masonry in the persecution of the Church in Mexico, as previously in Portugal and France, is a fact well established. That all these actions were apparently but the execution of a complete programme formally drawn up for all the Latin-American countries may not be so well known. The expulsion of religious Orders, the attacks upon the confessional and the Sacraments, the enforced secularization of the schools and similar measures intended to prepare for the final and complete destruction of the Catholic Church are all definite Masonic ordinations enjoined upon the brotherhood. Political agitation is to be carried on everywhere

for this purpose. Those not willing to conform to this spirit of anti-Christianity, which is the ultimate expression of Masonic principles, shall be "liable to the most severe penalties of the Masonic law." Such are the regulations drawn up in the resolutions of the first General Congress of Latin-American Masonry, held at Buenos Aires in 1906. From the publication of the Central Verein, "Freemasonry and Christianity," we quote the following extracts originally taken from the tenth number of the Masonic journal of Caracas :

RESOLUTIONS.

5. Latin-American Masonry shall combat by every means in its power the clerical propaganda and the extablishment and development of religious congregations, combining efforts to secure their expulsion from these countries. To effect this : (*a*) Freemasons shall not have their children educated in colleges managed by religious bodies. (*b*) Freemasons shall use their influence to dissuade their wives and prohibit their children from going to confession to a priest. (*c*) Freemasons shall not contribute in any way to the support of the religious bodies and their chapels.

6. Freemasons shall strive to enlist members of political parties who may defend their ideals and undertake to vote for the separation of Church and State, the expulsion of the religious congregations, civil inquiry, civil marriage and divorce, purely secular education, lay nurses in the hospitals, the suppression of the military chaplains, and other clerical laws.

7. Every Mason shall be bound to act in the profane world in accordance with the principles of Freemasonry ; those who violate this code of honour being liable to the most severe penalties of the Masonic law.

10. Freemasonry shall strive to secure the withdrawal from the Vatican of the representatives of Governments, these not acknowledging the Papacy as an international power.

Throughout all the Latin-American countries this work has been systematically carried out. Beginning with the attempt to withdraw the wives and children of the brotherhood from the Church, Masonry ultimately contemplates depriving the Church of influence in schools, in the army, in hospitals and in institutions of every kind, finally wrecking its very altars when the time shall be ripe for universal proscription. This plan has been carried far forward in France, where even now the Catholic clergy, though called to the firing line of the army, are not officially acknowledged in their priestly capacity. The programme was executed in Portugal, and now the last stages of its fulfilment are witnessed in Mexico amid scenes of horrid, unspeakable carnage, lust, ribaldry and blasphemy.

VIII. FREEMASONRY AND THE WAR OF 1870.

BY MRS. C. E. JEFFERY.

A FEW days ago I happened to come across an article from *La Libre Parole* which I had cut out some years back at the time (now apparently forgotten) when the subject of International Freemasonry and its evil influence on modern politics was on the tapis. It was at the time when the Freemasons of Portugal had effected their successful coup, and the new Republic triumphantly established by murder and treachery was strenuously engaged in moulding itself on a greater Republic whose anti-clerical policy it was taking for a model.

We are now ourselves engaged in a life and death struggle for our existence as a nation ; so the *Time* tells

us ; and are apparently surrounded by a swarm of spies who communicate to the enemy information the most intimate and minute concerning the movements of our troops, and more particularly of our fleet, and the secret passages through the mine fields laid down for the protection of our coasts. I therefore believe that the warning to be gathered from this cutting from *La Libre Parole* comes a propos, and it carries the more weight because it comes in a letter written by the great Russian statesman, M. de Giers, whose name is very much to the fore now. The letter was addressed to a French journalists, M. de la Rive, confirming a conversation held many years before in a certain salon on a subject which was occupying the attention of all the world at that time, *viz.*, the causes of the French defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1870-1871—M. de Giers being at that time Ambassador at Stockholm.

"I would not," wrote M. de Giers, "have been the first to raise this delicate question, but as it has been already suggested, I can assure you I am well aware of the rôle which Freemasonry has played in this war (Franco-Prussian). I was then accredited to Berne, and in this town there existed an agency perfectly organised and acting with a precision entirely Prussian, for the obtaining of information concerning the French army, their strength, disposition, the amount of their munitions of war, provisions, etc., etc., with thousands of other particulars, all the most detailed and minute, which the French officers affiliated to Freemasonry communicated to the lodges ; and this information was transmitted with extraordinary rapidity by despatches sent to the Prussian Masonic agency at Berne. I have devoted deep study to this colossal organisation in order to present a detailed report to my Government. It is

unbelievable, is it not? Nevertheless nothing is truer or of more thrilling interest. The French nation had been condemned beforehand by international Freemasonry, and neither the best military organisation or strategical talent, nor the incontestable bravery of the troops would have enabled the French army to triumph. It was a combat of the blind against those who see."

FREEMASONRY AND THE GREAT WAR OF 1914.

(From the *Catholic Herald of India*, Nov. 4, 1914.)

An incident of the War is now making the tour of the English newspapers, which is reported to show "the practical value" of Freemasonry. At the time of the sack of Louvain, it is said, the Germans seized 50 men whom they bound and told they were going to be shot. The firing party had already raised their rifles to take aim when one of the fifty, a Freemason, made one of the Masonic signs. The German officer in command of the squad was himself a Freemason; and just as he was going to give the order to fire he saw the sign and recognised a "brother." He at once ordered the Freemason to leave the rank and told him to go away. "No," replied the citizen of Louvain. "My fellow-citizens are no more guilty than I am. If you are going to kill them I shall not go away and I shall be killed with them." Touched by the act of devotion the officer ordered the release of the fifty unfortunate men who thus owed their lives to the intervention of a Freemason fellow-citizen.

What would have happened if the fifty men had been soldiers surprised and surrounded? Would the Masonic sign have saved them all, or even the one who made it? It is strange that in nearly every war a story to the same effect has been reported—in the Boer War, at least, and

in the Franco-German War. Alison, besides, in his "History of Europe" (Vol. X. Chap. 46) gives two other instances. At the time of the Boer War the following appeared in an English newspaper :—

"The practical value of Freemasonry in time of need has been proved over and over again. A contributor writes as follows :—

"During the present war, the tie of the Brotherhood has been recognised both by Boer and Englishman. A colonel of a Canadian regiment at the Modder River, on a Sunday morning stroll, strayed too far from his camp, when he suddenly found himself covered by the rifle of a Boer. By a fortunate impulse he made the customary sign, and cried out, 'Don't shoot"—the Boer immediately threw down his rifle and hurried to the colonel, informing him that he belonged to 'de broederband in Pretoria,' and was a member of General Cronje's staff. He begged him to return at once to his camp, and made him accept a valuable coin as a souvenir of his escape."

Freemasonry praises such conduct, but the unsophisticated patriot reprobates it. If the Masonic rifle must drop before a Masonic enemy, what becomes of the duty of a loyal soldier ? "The duty of a faithful subject of a State at war," correctly remarks the writer of "Catholics and Freemasonry" (C. T. S.) "is to kill, disable or capture his country's enemy ; war exists for this end. By what right does he forego his country's interest at the call of Masonry ? It may be said that individual action is unimportant, but in certain cases it may prove of very great importance."

Commenting on the fact we have just reproduced about the Canadian colonel, the same writer says :—

"Put the case the other way and suppose the Canadian officer to have been Christian De Wet, who is said

to be a Freemason. The 'profane' Englishman would have ignored his Masonic gesticulations and have shot him, or taken him prisoner without a moment's hesitation. The Masonic Englishman, if duly challenged, must have responded to the sign, and acted much as the traitorous Boer did—sacrifice the interest of his country at the call of Freemasonry, or act contrary to the precepts of the Craft."

FREEMASONIC BROTHERHOOD IN THE TRENCHES.

(From the *Month*, 1916).

"At a time when friendly intercourse with the enemy in the field is necessarily unpatriotic and, indeed, is a military offence, it is strange that the military authorities should sanction the issue to soldiers who are Freemasons of cards testifying to membership of that association and printed in English, French, Italian, *German and Turkish*. Of course, one object may be to secure, if possible, humane treatment for prisoners of war, but it seems to us an evil precedent, and one very likely to be abused to the detriment of military discipline. Although British Freemasonry has never developed, as far as we are aware, the anti-Christian and atheistic spirit which animates the lodges abroad, and in some cases has officially repudiated them, still in its essence it is opposed to true citizenship, as being a secret and artificial association, and it is notoriously responsible for much abuse of influence in the State services. That in France the influence of Masonry, under M. Combes and General André, nearly ruined the Army is now a matter of open knowledge. One has only to read the able exposure of that past nefarious campaign as further illustrated by the present state of

our Ally's gallant Army, in the March issue of *Studies*, to realize the inadvisability of our military authorities giving any official countenance to Masonry amongst our forces. *The Times'* report says that the idea of issuing these cards came from Canada, which renders the whole proceeding more suspicious still, for Canada is the home of a particularly virulent type of Masonry closely akin to the Continental variety. Every one can see that military discipline would be endangered if, for instance, soldiers who are members of the British Section of the International Socialist Movement were provided with cards, "printed in English, French, Italian, German and Turkish, vouching for their membership and asking for kindly treatment" at the hands of their brethren abroad. It seems to us that the official recognition of International Freemasonry constitutes an even greater danger."

The text of these cards was more fully reproduced in the *New Zealand Tablet*, January 11th, 1917 :—

A recent issue of the *Daily Sketch*, an English paper, contianed the following interesting paragraph : 'A Canadian major showed me a rather remarkable document the other day. It was a tripartite, as the lawyers say. It set forth in French, English and German that Major So-and-so was a British officer, and if he fell into the hands of any German brother all courtesies were to be extended to him and all needful expenditures made on his behalf, in the sacred name of the Brotherhood, or words to that effect. The gallant major stoutly maintained that this paper would not only save him from ill-treatment if he was captured, but would ensure that he did not go in lack of anything he asked for.'

No doubt the gallant major had excellent authority for his conviction, which authority, is contained in

point of fact in a 'peculiar notice' which was published some time ago in selected papers, and which appears to have some official sanction. It runs thus :—'Freemasons serving with the forces abroad may now be supplied, by permission of the Military and Masonic authorities, with a card printed in English, French, Italian, German, and Turkish, vouching for their Masonic membership, and asking for kindly treatment at the hands of any Freemasons with whom they may come in contact. The cards are issued by the Charter-house Lodge, by special permission of the Grand Lodge of England. upon the production of the necessary authority. The idea was suggested to them by the Canadian Freemasons serving with the forces, who are supplied with similiar vouchers by the Canadian Grand Lodges.'

A MASONIC SPLIT.

(From the *Month*, 1916).

Whatever may be the nature of the tie that binds the Masonic brotherhood together, that tie has definitely snapped under the strain of the present European conflict. During the Boer campaign of 1900-1901 all sorts of stories were in circulation narrating how on this or that occasion the loyalty of British officers was compromised by their allegiance to the Craft. I may confess that I am doubtful as to the truth of these stories, and still more as to the truth of those other anecdotes which describe how an accused in the dock by using a Masonic sign has made a successful appeal for lenient treatment to the judge, a brother Mason, who was trying the case. Whether there be any foundation for gossip of this kind or not, it is certain that the solidarity of Freemasonry as an international organization has now completely broken down. Patriotism weighs more than

any artificial bond of fellowship, however much cemented by oaths or community of aims. The fact may be commended to the notice of those who attribute to Freemasonry an almost infinite power of mischief. The Church is no doubt fully justified in looking upon the Craft, as it has developed among the Latin races of the Continent, as a relentless and a most formidable foe, but there are limits beyond which it cannot go. Before the war the French Freemasons of the Grand Orient seem to have been committed to something very like Pacifism, but they could neither hold back their countrymen when the crisis came, nor could they, in spite of all their efforts, make any impression upon the Grand Lodges of Prussia during the period immediately preceding the war. Upon this a word may be said later, but for the moment I wish to insist upon the extent and completeness of the schism which the war has caused. In December, 1915, Colonel C. E. Cassal, speaking before the Board of General Purposes of the United Grand Lodge, informed his hearers, documents in hand :

"German Masonic papers have been full of articles relating to English Freemasonry. . . . They consist of scurrilous attacks not only upon England but upon English Freemasonry, and scurrillous attacks upon our Grand Master, our Pro-Grand Master and the leaders of Freemasonry in England. They are a disgrace to any form of Masonry whatever."

In the course of the same discussion the President of the Board of General Purposes, Mr. Alfred Robbins, stated in the most formal and official terms :

"From the day the war broke out we have altogether ceased communication, direct or indirect, with any Grand Lodge in an enemy country. Only one attempt, and that indirect, had been made in the whole of that

period to approach us by such a Grand Lodge, and that was not a German Grand Lodge; and that indirect attempt, made through the Grand Lodge of a neutral country, was to ask our investigation of the British system of dealing with prisoners of war and thus by implication to attack it. We declined absolutely . . . to be drawn into controversy or correspondence of any kind, direct or indirect, with the Grand Lodge of an enemy country."

No one who studies the pages of the accredited organs of Masonic opinion in the United Kingdom can entertain any serious doubt that these statements are in strict accordance with the facts. In the earlier part of the year 1915 a rather heated discussion had taken place in the same assembly over the question of the exclusion from the English Lodges of all brothers of the Craft who had been born in an enemy country, whether naturalised or not. In spite of some opposition, clearly voiced by the editor of the Leading Masonic journal, the resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority. Even a proviso exempting from this disability those members of an English Lodge who had sons fighting on the side of the Allies was rejected. The main facts connected with the dispute were announced in *The Times* under circumstances which some brethren apparently considered to be hardly reconcilable with the proper observance of the Masonic pledge of secrecy. Still later in the year more drastic propositions were introduced and, I believe, ultimately carried, which prescribed in the case of Freemasons of enemy birth not merely suspension from the meetings for the period of the war, but permanent and final exclusion except in the case where an unanimous vote of the Lodge pronounced for their retention on the roll.

A well known English representative of the Craft, writing more than a year ago in the *American Freemason*, remarks:—

"I may remind my readers that those Grand Lodges which are officially recognised by the Grand Lodge of England—and without which recognition English Freemasons are not allowed to admit into their Lodges Brethren of other countries—are contained in the Official Year Book issued annually by our Grand Lodge. Now it must be a matter of grave thought for the future . . . . that not one of our Allies are joined with us in the bonds of Masonic Brotherhood, except France to a very slight extent, and Italy. Neither Russian, Serbian, nor Belgian Freemasons are at present allowed in our Lodges, and speedily our Grand Lodge must awake to this almost perilous state of things and the energies of our diplomatists in Freemasonry must be aroused to inquire fully into the causes of this and find a way to a thorough *rapprochement*."

Here are some remarks contributed to *The Freemason* by a well known Masonic writer, Mr. Churchward :

"The Germans have by their action thrown over the last ties of the laws of our Brotherhood and must therefore be treated as a renegade faction. They have not upheld, supported or acted as Brother Masons should have done according to the acknowledged laws of our Brotherhood ; and should therefore for the present and in the future not be acknowledged as Brother Masons in any form or way. . . . They have not striven for peace ; on the contrary led by their Grand Lodge they entered into the political arena, broke of relationship with their French Brothers, and therefore placed themselves entirely outside the Fraternity. By their own action they have broken the Sacred Masonic laws and

are no longer Brothers according to our Constitution, and should never be admitted into our Lodges again or acknowledged as belonging to the Brotherhood.

The German Masons on their part seem to have expressed themselves in language not less uncompromising, and in particular they have fiercely denounced the machinations of the Italian Lodges, which they hold to be mainly responsible for the entry of Italy into the war on the side of the Allies.

XII.

MASONRY'S WEAK POINT.

If asked to put a finger on the strong point of Freemasonry—the feature, I mean, which best accounts for its popularity and for the vast number of men who join it—most people, I imagine, would probably fix on its principle of mutual service; *viz.*, the fact that a Mason, under all circumstances of life, can by use of his secret sign secure recognition and claim brotherly help. This certainly seems to be the attraction which tells on Catholics; who, when taken to task for joining Freemasonry, almost invariably reply: "Father, I could not help it. Freemasonry is the key to success. Unless I am a Freemason I have practically no chance in life." And often enough he will go on to prove his point: "In this department (Civil Service, Railway, Army or whatever it may be) such and such officers are Freemasons; and under them all the employments, all the favours, all the promotions go to Freemasons." One of the first questions they ask is: Are you a Mason; and if you answer: "No," your prospects are gone. He will then perhaps go on to give instances:—"Take *So and so*—one of the steadiest and cleverest

and most popular men in the whole service. By rights his turn for promotion came three years ago. And yet four other men, not half so good as he, have walked up over his head; and there he remains at the bottom of the ladder, simply because he is a Catholic and *not* a Freemason. Another time it will be a shopkeeper, formerly subscrub in a large firm, who left and set up for himself. Being a Freemason, he simply went round to all the customers of the old firm, and said "I am a Mason, while my boss is not. I am opening a new shop of my own; and I expect you, *as a brother Mason*, to transfer your custom from him to me." The result was ruin to the original firm, and marked prosperity to the new one.

Stories of this sort are as thick as blackberries, and one hardly knows what to make of them. Some allegations, if true, would amount to a public scandal. For instance, it is confidently asserted that Freemason judges have been known to instruct the jury so as to secure acquittal for a prisoner who, according to the evidence, ought to have been condemned—and this simply because the prisoner at the right moment raised his hand in the dock, and made the secret Masonic sign. Worse than this. Several stories are current to the effect that in the South African war, the loyalty of British soldiers was more than once sacrificed to the Masonic allegiance; and that captures were uneffected and victories deliberately unachieved just because some Boer officer signalled out his Masonic sign.

Obviously one cannot swallow such tales straight away as if they were established facts. They resemble ghost stories in this respect, that it is extremely difficult to verify any single one of them; and yet they

are so numerous and circumstantial that one feels constrained to suspect something at the back of them. This much at least one can say. The Masonic profession of mutual help is certainly liable to lend itself to such abuses; and even where the misdemeanour is not proved, the very secrecy of the order is enough to breed suspicion among the non-Masonic public, and thus to undermine the spirit of trust and mutual confidence between man and man. It is on this broader and safer ground that we prefer to deal with the matter.

The combination of men into cliques or coteries may be either good, bad or indifferent according to circumstances. If for the promotion of some good end, the combination becomes good; if for a bad end, it becomes bad. Suppose the aim and object is in itself good, it can even then become evil if pursued in a manner calculated to give an undue advantage, or to interfere with legitimate competition, or to encroach on the claims of justice and fair play. Moreover, if such a combination is to be healthy in its workings, it must rest on some foundation in nature. For instance, suppose the Italians in India were to combine for mutual support in a foreign land, the common kinship of race and nationality would afford a sufficient reason. But where, as in Masonry, thousands of persons of altogether promiscuous character combine for mutual service on no other basis except that of mere membership, this natural foundation is wanting. If I afford help to some individual because he is a man of special merit, or because he is in special need, or even because he is a relation, or a fellow-countryman, or a college friend—all this is intelligible to the world in general, and can be calculated on and made full allowance for. But if I afford the same help to that

individual simply on the ground that he is a fellow-Mason, and especially because he is a superior officer in Masonry, this introduces an arbitrary determinant of action, which the general public is unable to gauge—thus creating a sense of uncertainty into all our civic and social relations.

In this way the very feature which constitutes the strong point in Freemasonry proves in the long run its weak point also. However plausible and innocent the principle of "brotherly aid" may appear at first sight, it is a system so liable to abuse that it could easily tend to weaken or destroy the spirit of whole-hearted citizenship, and thus prove a menace to the Commonwealth and to the State.

Time alone was required for the world in general to realise this important truth. The saying of Abraham Lincoln: "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time" has pointed application here. The foregoing articles have shown how the realisation of this point has begun. The Catholic Church no longer stands alone in exposing the pernicious tendencies of Freemasonry. The world outside, the rulers of nations and leaders of politics, have come to recognise in the craft a serious menace to several things which all men of honest and upright dispositions hold most dearly at heart, namely, the spirit of openness and fair-play in social and business relations; the spirit of integrity in official service; the spirit of whole-hearted loyalty and devotion to the public good. Simultaneously in France, Belgium, Italy and Argentina all this has taken hold of the public consciousness; and, this on authentic and first hand knowledge. The lesson, if taken to heart, will

end, in the total discredit of Freemasonry—a consummation greatly to be desired by all honest and well meaning men.

XIII.

SOME REMARKS FOR CATHOLICS.

Most Catholics all over the world are firmly convinced that they must not join the Freemasons. In continental countries the anti-Catholic spirit of the order provides an obvious and sufficient deterrent; so that membership would be equivalent to overt apostasy. In English-speaking countries the case is different. Even here the great mass of Catholics are perfectly satisfied with the fact that the order is condemned by the Church. But among those whose faith or zeal for religion is weak, the common supposition that Freemasonry is "the key to success in life" affords a temptation to first enter its ranks, and then to try and justify the step by pointing to its harmless and innocent character. The foregoing articles will, we hope, have done much to empty these arguments of their force. We have shown that even English Freemasonry embodies three features which no Catholic on principle can accept; namely, its principle of indifferentism, its secrecy and its oath. Secondly, we have shown that Continental Freemasonry is blatantly anti-Catholic, and that English Freemasonry is also implicated through the solidarity of the order all over the world. Finally these substantial arguments are re-enforced by showing that the Catholic Church does not stand alone in the condemnation of the order; that Freemasonry has made itself odious by its political machination and its encroachments on the rights and liberties of others, and even proved

itself a danger to political integrity and loyal citizenship. The fact that Freemasonry is thus discredited, even in the outside world, ought to prove a considerable help to any Catholic who might feel a hankering after membership.

It is well known that in English circles "the court sets the fashion ;" and it is quite probable that numbers of people have been induced to become Freemasons for the simple reason that the late King Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, was Grand Master in the order. Even this somewhat puerile attraction is now a thing of the past. Not only did Edward cut off all Masonic connections on reaching the throne ; but it is an ascertained fact, worth putting on record, that his present Majesty neither is now, and never was, a Freemason. Thus the *Catholic Herald of India* of June 22nd, 1910, wrote :—

From the *Daily Chronicle* we copy the following interesting note :—

"We read in the 'Answers to Correspondents' column of a contemporary the statement : 'King George V. is a Freemason.' This little sentence requires but one word to make it correct. It is the simple unassuming word—Not."

This would confirm what we have seen stated elsewhere that, at the accession of his father to the throne, the present King declined to accept the Masonic succession of Edward VII.

On the same subject, "Max" in *Capital* writes :— "King Edward the VII., as Prince of Wales, was, as most people know, a Freemason. The present King has never been initiated into the craft. As to the reason, therefore, the story is now being told and has appeared in print, that His Majesty would not enter

the ranks of the Freemasons unless he was fully informed beforehand on the mysteries of the Craft. But an exception could not be made, even in the case of a member of the Royal Family, and hence King George has never become a "brother,"—which, if it be true, throws a light on the character of the King. He will not take things for granted."

FREEMASONS DON'T WANT US.

Finally, those Catholics who are unmoved by the Church telling them that they *must* not become Freemasons will perhaps find their self-love a more effectual deterrent, when they are told bluntly that the Freemasons themselves do not wish to have them. This is what we read in the *New Zealand Tablet* :—

"Some time ago a Freemason, of some prominence in the craft in New Zealand, informed us that the bulk of the brethren of the mystic tie in these countries view with disfavour the admission of Catholics to their ranks and look with deep distrust upon the motives which lead to their initiation. And well they may. And now from across the Pacific comes a statement, from a high Masonic source, that the brethren in America also 'hae their suspecions' about Catholics that seek to cross the portals of the well-'tyled' lodge. Joseph W. Pomfrey is a thirty-third degree Mason ; he is likewise editor of an organ of the craft entitled *Five Points Fellowship ;* and in its columns he has recently delivered his soul upon the subject of Catholic Freemasons in the following outspoken way : 'His Holiness Pius X., following the noble example of the long line of illustrious Pontiffs of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, has recently issued an Encyclical forbidding the laity of the Roman Catholic Church uniting with the Masonic fraternity. For so issuing, he is entitled to the ever

lasting gratitude of Masons the world over, for the very good reason that the Encyclical will have the effect to keep out of the Masonic order an undesirable class of men. A Roman Catholic becoming a member of the Masonic order, and claiming to hold his membership in the Roman Catholic Church, cannot be true to both ; and if false to either, he cannot be true to either. It is fair to infer that it is not the sublime teachings of Freemasonry that attracted the Roman Catholic, but only the substantial benefits he hoped would accrue to him by becoming a Freemason.' "

A STRONGER TESTIMONY.

The same idea is forcibly brought out in an article by S. Spurgeon Medhurst, published in *The Builder*, a magazine devoted to "Masonic News and Teachings." The article is captioned : "Free Masons and Roman Catholics," and is herewith reprinted in full :—

"We may be without warrant of law for excluding Roman Catholics from Freemasonry, but we have ample warrant in Masonic ideals and practices for refusing all applications from members of the Roman Catholic Church. The psychic gateway to a Masonic lodge is, I submit, too narrow to admit Roman Catholics. We ought to refuse admission to all such applicants for the sake of the fraternity. for the sake of the applicant, for the sake of our principles of neutrality.

1. "For the Sake of the Fraternity.—A Roman Catholic can only become a Free Mason by forsaking his Church. He must either be a bad Mason or a bad Roman Catholic. He cannot be a good Mason and a good Roman Catholic. A man who leaves his Church for the sake of Freemasonry may easily be tempted in different circumstances to leave Freemasonry for the

sake of his Church. There exists for this reason a justifiable doubt as to whether such applicants are ever fit and proper persons to be made Masons.

"Further, if we admit Roman Catholics we confirm him in the idea that Freemasonry will supply him with what he fancies is lacking in his Church. This encourages the applicant to hold exaggerated opinions concerning Freemasonry, with undoubted, undesirable reactions which cannot but be injurious to the fraternity.

2. "For the Sake of the Applicant.—A Roman Catholic who knocks at the door of a Masonic lodge either renounces his past confessions of religion or practices a species of unworthy casuistry, for he knows that his action will exclude him from absolution and Communion. While, as Masons we hold no opinions concerning these peculiar religious rites, as Masons we cannot knowingly assist another to exclude himself from the benefits of his religion, no matter what opinions we may hold as private individuals regarding them.

"A Roman Catholic may apply for admission to the fraternity averring that he no longer conforms to the rules of his Church, and that he does not consider them binding upon him. To such the answer should be that while Masonry regards all forms of religion with equal friendly good will, it offers no substitute for any, nor does it welcome applicants who, in order to qualify for admission, have to acknowledge that they have only a formal connection with the religion which they profess.

3. "For the Sake of Neutrality.—A Roman Catholic again may seek admission to the fraternity as a protest against Rome's ecclesiastical tyranny. He should be told that Freemasonry will not open its doors for any such purpose, that the fraternity exercises perfect neutrality in regard to all forms of religion, and will not break

such neutrality by knowingly encouraging any member of any organized religion to do anything which runs counter to the rulings or teachings of that religion On the other hand, and by the same rule, we should equally be infringing neutrality were we to refuse a candidate suitable in every other respect, solely on the ground that he was a known opponent of the Roman Catholic Church.

"We should unhesitatingly reject an application from a Sinhalese Buddhist, because Buddhism in Ceylon is atheistic, and no Sinhalese can profess belief in the Deity, without denying his faith. A Roman Catholic believes in God, but he also believes in an infallible Church, and that infallible Church specially forbids him to be a Mason. We deny the privilege of our orders equally to the Sinhalese and the Catholics and on the same grounds, *viz.*, that Masonry cannot under any circumstances officially countenance religious recantation.

"We are aware that some Roman Catholics are Free Masons, but we do not understand how or why. It would be un-Masonic to suggest, without proof, that they are unworthy brethren as *prima facie* what their obligations have made them, but in consonance with the three explanations already given we would never vote for the admission of a Roman Catholic applicant unless there were some very extraordinary reasons why he should be received. Free Masons do not exclude Roman Catholics, Roman Catholics in *rerum natura* exclude themselves. If a Jew or a member of any branch of the Christian Church other than the Roman Catholic Church should apply for admission to Freemasonry no questions would be asked him concerning either his creed, his standing or relation with his church. In case of Roman Catholics such queries unfortunately become inevitable."

MASONIC BALLS, ETC.

Even Catholics who have no intention or desire of joining the Freemasons are often thrown into social intercourse with them and hesitate as to how far this social intercourse is allowable. The question of attending Masonic concerts or balls is one which we had to thrash out several times in the columns of THE EXAMINER; and so we close this series by gathering together such extracts as are calculated to clear up the point:—

I. A MASONIC BALL.

SIR,—A number of Freemasons got up a Dance which was merely for the entertainment of their friends, and at which there was no Masonic ceremony. In other words it was simply Masonic in name. The question arose whether those Catholics who were invited could attend. One opinion expressed was that to attend it would be a mortal sin. Others thought that this view was too rigoristic, and when beyond the requirements of the Church. Will you kindly inform me which view is the correct one? I may add that some persons were so angry at the idea of attendance being a mortal sin that they said they would rather leave the Church than submit to such rigorism.

Yours, etc.
ECCLESIÆ AMICUS.

Comment on the foregoing letter.

With regard to the last part of the letter, we know that people when they are angry sometimes say foolish things. Thus, it is always a foolish thing to talk of giving up one's religion on any ground whatsoever; and such a sentiment, if seriously and deliberately meant, would be sinful. We suppose however that

such remarks were made merely by way of letting off steam. If the Church *really does* forbid Catholics to attend a Masonic ball, every Catholic ought to recognise the right of the Church to do so, even though the reasons of the prohibition may not be fully understood. The only question therefore is: What does the Church say on the matter?

What the Church says is this:—"Those who give their name to the Freemasonic sect, or confer on it any favour whatsoever (favorem qualemcumque praestantes) incur *ipso facto* excommunication reserved to the Holy See." Attending a Masonic ball is clearly not "giving one's name to the sect;" the only question is whether it amounts to "favouring the sect." Lehmkuhl says that the chief actions referred to are "to receive, serve or minister to the sect, to lend a house for Masonic meetings, to help in getting Freemasons together, to advise people to join them, to protect them or to promote their cause, etc. Attending a Masonic ball is not expressly mentioned in any book we have at hand. But we remember this case being discussed during our studies:—"In a certain town a Masonic ball was held, to which the chief citizens were invited—some Catholics among them. The charge for tickets was a high one, and the proceeds were to go to the public hospital. One Catholic named Lucius, fearing to offend the influential Freemasons of the city, paid a large sum for his ticket, and went. The question is, did he incur the censure or not?" On the one hand, there was nothing specifically Masonic in the ball itself, which was a purely social affair. Again, the money did not go to the Freemasons, but to a public institution. This being the case, two out of the three students appointed to solve the case thought that it was

not a "promotion of the sect as such," and therefore Lucius did not incur the excommunication. The third student argued that it was a great help to the Masonic sect as such, to enable it to pose as a public benefactor; that this would increase its influence, already powerful, and induce people to join it, etc.; and therefore he thought that Lucius *did* incur the censure. The professor in summing up agreed with the last solution, because he thought that attending the ball and contributing money to it was under the circumstances a decided promotion of the sect as such. If the ball had been a purely social and unofficial affair which did not in any way tend to advance the reputation or interests of Freemasonry, perhaps the more lenient answer might have been preferable. But taking the case with its circumstances as given, there is much to be said in support of the severer one.

The above case gives us the principles on which to proceed. A Masonic ball, as they call it, is certainly not a Masonic function in the strict and objectionable sense. It is merely an expression of the social spirit of those who belong to the order. There is nothing sectarian in it, nor is it an official part of Masonry as such. It is, we suppose, got up under the auspices of Masonic officials, but is not necessarily intended as an engine for promoting any secret aims of the craft. In case the Masons attend in their costume, this gives it a further connection with the order; but not sufficient to convert it into a Masonic function properly so-called. Hence the attendance of a Catholic at the ball cannot *sweepingly* be condemned as a sin in itself, still less as a mortal sin. If in any particular case it is wrong for a Catholic to attend, this will be due to special circumstances, such as were given in the above

case. If the success of the ball will decidedly promote the influence of Freemasonry, *e. g.*, by enabling it to pose as a public benefactor, etc; then Catholics are forbidden to do anything to promote that object. The question will be, whether the attendance of a certain Catholic or number of Catholics amounts to "favorem qualemcumque." If the benefit conferred on Freemasonry is so slight as to be trivial and negligible, no sin, or at most a venial sin, will be committed; and a mortal sin will be reached only when the promotion of the craft is tangible and notable—according to the principle that grave matter is required to constitute a mortal sin.

Such are the principles; all that remains is their application to the local case. Is the ball merely an expression of the social spirit of those who are Free-Masons, with no further object? Or, is it subordinated to the craft as a means of securing public influence in any tangible and ascertainable way? If the former, we certainly cannot endorse the opinion that attendance would be a mortal sin. If the latter, then it seems to come within the range of the ecclesiastical prohibition; and the sin committed would be venial or mortal, according to the amount of favour, support or promotion given by each individual Catholic who attends. If the case is serious the sin would be mortal, and the censure would be incurred. But observe, the sin would not arise from the ball being anything sinful in itself; it would arise from the disobedience shown to the legitimate commands of the Church. As we are not conversant with the exact case, we cannot venture to decide categorically upon it. We cannot even ascertain from the description whether it was really a "Masonic Ball" in the ordinary sense of the term. All we can say is

that attendance at it must be clearly a case of "favorem praestantes," and this in a serious degree ascertained to be such, before the sin and the consequent censure can be incurred.

At the same time, putting aside sin and censure, we should decidedly prefer that Catholics should make it a matter of principle not to have any, even the remotest connection with anything Freemasonic—even a ball. Being *socially* free to go or not to go, they can politely excuse themselves because of the view which the Catholic Church takes of it. Outsiders know well enough what the Catholic position is; and if they do not understand the reasons of it, lend them a copy of our booklet on Freemasonry. If you treat them civilly they will take no offence, and will probably be rather edified to find Catholics so firm to their principles.

II. A MASONIC BALL.

SIR,—With reference to the letter of *Ecclesiae Amicus* allow me to ask your opinion upon another case :—

A priest was written to by one of his flock :—"We have received an invitation to a Masonic ball. Can we attend ?" To this he replied :—"The ball being openly styled *Masonic*, I do not see how you could attend."

A few days later, the same priest was asked the question again by another of his flock, and he said : "You certainly should not attend."

After the performance it was said that Masons had appeared at the ball wearing their Masonic emblems.

Yours etc.
[ACCURATE.]

Comment on the foregoing letter.

The real question at issue is as follows :—Does the fact that a ball is openly styled "Masonic ;" or aga in

the fact that Masons appear at it in their Masonic dress, bring attendance under the prohibition of the Church ? It is not easy to answer this question. Take a similar example. Suppose the Anglican congregation of the place were to get up a ball simply out of social enterprise. Calling it an "Anglican ball" would not make it Anglican. It would merely indicate the religious persuasion of the community which had got it up. If the ball were got up to promote Anglican influence, etc., the case would be different. Similarly the fact, that a ball is got up by the Masonic community and called "Masonic" would not *ipso facto* make it Masonic in the forbidden sense. Similarly the attendance of Masons in Masonic dress does not necessarily make it into a Masonic function in the strict sense ; just as the attendance of the Catholic clergy in soutanes and birettas would not make a gathering "Catholic" in the strict sense. If, however, such balls form part of the Masonic policy for securing influence ; then in that case attendance would, we think, come under the phrase "favorem qualemcumque praestantes." Until this is clearly ascertained, however, by an authoritative declaration, or by sure knowledge of the facts, we have no right to assert that it is so. Hence, till such a decision is arrived at, we cannot on our own authority *forbid* Catholics to attend. The most we can do is to *advise* them not to go, on the general ground before mentioned. If locally the attendance is looked upon by the general public, or by the Catholic community as a sort of patronage or encouragement of Freemasonry, this would give a sufficient ground for such advice ; and attendance under such circumstances would seem to us a failure of duty, *in the wider sense of the word.* At the same time, unless we have certain ground to go upon, we cannot

forbid attendance as a duty *in the strict sense of the word;* that is, as an obligation binding under sin or canonical censure. Possibly a closer knowledge of Masonic balls would enable us to decide the question categorically. But in the absence of full knowledge we can only follow the general principles of moral theology, and abstain from imposing a strict obligation where the existence of the obligation is not clear and certain. In such cases our appeal is to the better feelings of the individual rather than to any exactly defined law—that is to say, it is more in accordance with the Catholic spirit not to have anything to do with Freemasonry in any form.

III. A MASONIC CONCERT.

SIR,—A Variety Concert and Dance took place recently in a certain station, " in aid of the funds for the (local) Masonic Institutions." A prominent Catholic's name appeared on the programme of the concert. Some Catholics, being invited, excused themselves on the ground that they could not support a masonic institution either by money or attendance. This was, considered by others as "narrow-minded if not fanatical," and placed in contrast with the "liberal-minded generosity" of the Catholic singer who has allowed himself to be put on the programme. Please give your verdict on the merits of the case.

Yours etc.
[SIGNED.]

Comment on the foregoing letter.

According to Catholic principles, as laid down by the Church, Catholics are forbidden not only to become Freemasons, but even to countenance them, or to do anything to promote their enterprise or prestige (favo-

rem qualemcumque praestantes]. And Catholics who knowingly act against these rules of the Church to a serious extent fall under the sentence of excommunication : (*Apostolicæ sedis*, 1869, Cap. II, para 4).

As regards "Masonic concerts and balls," these are of two kinds :—(1) Those which are got up for public charities which are not masonic, or merely for social amusement ; and (2) those which are got up for distinctly freemasonic purposes, such as funds for a Masonic institute. In the former case there may arise some discussion as to whether Catholics are strictly forbidden to attend, because it is sometimes argued that they are not really masonic in aim, etc. Even in these cases our constant advice would be that Catholics should stand aloof, because such meetings always seem, in some indirect way at least, to promote freemasonry. But in case of the concert and dance reported by our correspondent, there is not the slightest room for discussion. It is clearly and in the full sense a masonic enterprise, having for its object the promotion of masonic work ; and therefore Catholics are forbidden to take any part in it, or in any way to promote it—and this (if the law is taken strictly) under pain of excommunication. We do not mean to assert that the Catholics who did take part are actually in a state of excommunication, because presumably they did not know the law and penalty of the Church on this point, and perhaps never thought of the idea of promoting freemasonry, etc. But at any rate when a similar case occurs they will, after reading this comment, know their duty better.

IV. MARRYING A FREEMASON.

Sir,—There is here a Catholic who became a free mason and afterwards gave up all practice of religion, but wants now to marry a Catholic girl. I told him that

unless he gave up Freemasonry I could not bless his marriage. He replied that he saw no harm in Freemasonry and believes that I am at liberty to marry him. I assured him not, so long as he continued a Mason.

Yours etc.
[A Parish Priest.]

Comment on the foregoing letter.

When a Catholic becomes a Freemason, he not only commits a grave sin against ecclesiastical obedience, but also incurs excommunication, from which he can only be absolved by the permission of the Pope—a permission which, however, is often delegated to the bishops in order to save time. By excommunication a Catholic is cut off from the membership of the Church, at least as regards the use of the sacraments ; so that no priest can give him holy Communion, or any other sacrament, until he has repented of his sin, confessed it and received absolution both from the sin and from the excommunication. If a priest *did* marry a man in that state of excommunication the marriage would be valid, but a sacrilege would be involved. Moreover, the Catholic who has become a Freemason, and given up the practice of his faith, does not thereby deliver himself from the spiritual jurisdiction of the church. He cannot pose as a Protestant and demand to be treated as a Protestant. He is still a subject of the Church, though a disobedient and penalised one. Hence it is his duty to obey the Church, and give up Freemasonry, and obtain reconciliation, and then to get his marriage performed before the proper priest and witnesses according to the law. If he goes to the Registrar or Protestant minister the marriage will be invalid—that is to say, no marriage in the sight of God.

As to his "not seeing any harm" in Freemasonry, that is not to the point. A man might see no harm in attending Salvation Army meetings, or in marrying his first cousin, or in divorce, or in having two wives. Nevertheless the Church forbids these things; and the business of a Catholic is to obey. Similarly a soldier may see no harm in leaving the camp, or in shooting at a stray roebuck, or in drinking water out of a pond while on the march, or in stopping in bed after the bugle has sounded. But he is bound to obey orders all the same; and he ought to suppose that the authorities know what they are doing in giving such orders. So with the Catholic. The Church authorities cannot be so fatuous as to see imaginary harm where there is none; and their attitude towards Freemasonry, he may be sure, is based on solid grounds. But whether he sees this or not, his simple business as a Catholic is to obey and to leave responsibility for the orders to those who have framed them.

Is Freemasonry a Religion?

We read in a contemporary that the (Anglican) Bishop of Calcutta, in his sermon at the Annual Masonic service, said: "It is sometimes asked whether Freemasonry is a religion; it is not." Against this is quoted a standard work of Freemasonry by Churchward which says "Freemasonry is the old time religion of the world without dogmas or sects." This latter represents the ordinary Masonic teaching. Masonry certainly upholds belief in God the architect of the universe whom it addresses in prayer, and thereby constitutes itself a religion, containing one dogma at least. But it goes further, and asserts as a principle that this limited belief is sufficient for the purposes of

[illegible] the d[illegible]
or s[illegible] that it is not s[illegible]
Freemasonry is not sectarian, but is rathe[illegible]
arian, through the way it preaches the non-i[illegible]
of those dogmas and creeds which the sects ma[illegible]
be of vital importance.

But in allowing that Freemasonry is not sectarian, [illegible] least we must maintain that it is anti-Christian. For according to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, Christ is the one Saviour of the world, and belief in his redemptive office is the one sole basis of salvation. To deny this doctrine of Christianity is to repudiate Christianity itself, and to offer to mankind a religion which claims to satisfy all man's requirements without Christianity.

The tolerance with which Freemasonry admits Christians to membership, without requiring them to repudiate their faith, cloaks over and disguises, but does not efface its constitutionally anti-Christian character.

When a Christian joins the Freemasons he does not necessarily give up his own belief in Christianity. But by enrolling himself in a society which holds the anti-Christian principle that Christianity is not necessary, he is distinctly disloyal to Christianity.

To take an analogy. No Englishman who believed in the authority of the king would join a Socialistic society which denied the authority of the king. For such a society is by its very nature an enemy to the king, and it is a breach of loyalty to give countenance or patronage to it. In the same way no Christian, believing as he does in the divine character of Christianity, and in the necessity of being a Christian, can without disloyalty join or patronise a society that professes to offer a religion which is complete without Christianity,

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n condemns it.

matter is well illustrated as follows:—
orrespondent, "Once a Mason," in a letter to the
ch Times, tells the following story:—"Many years
go when I belonged to a lodge," says the writer, "I was
at a Masonic banquet where the chaplain ended the grace
with the words 'through Jesus Christ Our Lord.' For
this inadvertence (!) he was sternly taken to task by the
Worshipful Master. That was the time when we were
fighting the battle against undenominational religion,
and I perceived, as I still maintain, that a Catholic
could not consistently associate himself with a system
which professes a religion that forbids mention of the
Name that is above every name. So I at once resigned
my membership of the Craft, and the chaplain also re-
signed. The brethren solemnly rebuked me for plainly
stating to the W. M. the reason of my withdrawal.' Such
an incident as this is a further testimony to the wisdom
of the Church's prohibition against Catholics joining
Freemasonry.

[The End.]

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